

Lebanese woman injured in Israeli shell attack

RASHAYA (AFP) — A Lebanese woman was wounded in an Israeli bombardment in south Lebanon Saturday in retaliation for an anti-Israeli attack by Hizbollah guerrillas, police said. Mariam Sobh, 60, was injured by fragments from a shell which fell on Sahr, a Hizbollah stronghold around 10 kilometres outside the eastern sector of Israel's self-declared "security zone" in south Lebanon. Two hours earlier, Hizbollah claimed responsibility for a mortar attack on an Israeli army position at Ghazlan on the edge of the central sector of the zone which Israel set up in 1985 to protect its northern border from attack. The Voice of the South, the radio of the Israeli-allied South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia, said the attack did not cause any casualties.

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8 dead, 55 injured in a Jordanian plane crash at a Belgian airshow



People watch thick smoke coming out from the Jordanian plane which crashed during an airshow in Ostende Saturday. Eight people were killed and 55 injured, ten of them seriously, when the bi-plane, performing a stunt, smashed into the ground (AFP photo)

OSTENDE, Belgium (AFP) — A Jordanian light aircraft crashed in a ball of flame during a stunt manoeuvre at a Belgian air show Saturday, killing eight and injuring 55, ten of them seriously, Belgian authorities said.

The single-engine plane failed to pull out of a loop and crashed into the ground near a Red Cross stand at the airport in Ostende where the show was being held.

Debris and flames showed members of the public

near the stand, causing many of the casualties.

The plane crashed about 100 metres from the public grandstand, and narrowly missed airliners lined up alongside the runway.

A crowd of nearly 10,000 had gathered at the air show, which was due to continue Sunday. The rest of the event has now been cancelled.

"The plane looked as though its controls had jammed. It exploded on impact with the ground,

sending debris and flames everywhere. People were burned," said a witness, who reported seeing a young child among the victims.

An emergency response plan was immediately activated, with ambulances from across the region sent to the site and hospital staff mobilised.

Panic swept through the spectators, who fled the show causing traffic chaos. The most seriously injured had to be helicoptered to

hospital, some being flown to Brussels.

All the injured were evacuated within an hour of the crash, said Paul Breyne, governor of Flanders, the region which includes Ostende.

Jean-Laurent Denis, a French amateur pilot attending the show, told Agence France Presse that the accident happened as the plane was completing a "loop-the-loop" manoeuvre.

"At the end of the loop, something went wrong. But



Captain Omar Bilal dies in plane crash

AMMAN (J.T.) — An official military source said Saturday that while the Jordanian Royal Falcons team was performing at an airshow in Belgium, one of the planes, piloted by Captain Omar Bilal, crashed into the ground killing the pilot and a group of spectators, and injuring many others.

The Royal Falcons team, which represents Jordan in most international airshows boasts the best Jordanian pilots under the leadership of Captain Omar Hweij and the management of Mufeed Hasoonch.

It was already at an altitude of less than 20 metres, which is too low for such a manoeuvre," he said.

A journalist for Flemish VTM Television said there were gusts of wind at the time of the crash.

A temporary morgue was

set up at the scene to identify the victims, who included the pilot of the aircraft.

Another Belgian air show to be held in Hechtel was cancelled, but an air show was scheduled to go ahead along the North Sea coast in the neighbouring country of the Netherlands.

"We have taken all security measures to reduce risks to a maximum," organiser Rob Peeters told a Dutch television station. "No plane will fly over the crowd, with the stunts taking place over the North Sea," while the spectators watch from the beach, he said.

U.S. envoy will return to Mideast in coming weeks

GAZA CITY (AFP) — U.S. envoy to the Middle East, Dennis Ross is to soon visit Israel and the Palestinian territories to launch a new initiative by Washington to save the peace process, Palestinian officials said Saturday.

Mr. Ross telephoned Palestinian President Yasser Arafat on Friday to inform him that he would make a tour of the region in the next few weeks, Palestinian international cooperation minister Nabil Shaath told AFP.

Mr. Ross said the visit would come "after development of the American initiative to relaunch the peace process," Mr. Shaath added.

Mr. Shaath is due to meet with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy following a meeting between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Levy in Brussels earlier this

week. Washington hailed that meeting as a "very good step forward" to unlocking the peace process, deadlocked since Israel began work in mid-March on a Jewish settlement project in Arab east Jerusalem.

But U.S. State Department Spokesman Nicholas Burns added: "They still have a long way to go before we can say that significant progress has been made."

Mr. Ross last visited the region in mid-May, but failed to make any progress in getting the Israelis and Palestinians back to the negotiating table.

Earlier this month, U.S. President Bill Clinton said "specific new actions" were needed to revive the peace process.

UAE firm said to lease 3 jets to Royal Jordanian

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A leasing venture created by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Britain this year will lease three aircraft to Jordan under an agreement to be signed soon, press reports said Saturday.

Oasis International Leasing Company (OILC) has reached a tentative accord with the Royal Jordanian Airline on the lease of the three planes, the UAE economic weekly newspaper Al Iqtisadi said.

"A final agreement for this package will be signed after OILC is officially launched in August," it said, without specifying the value of the deal.

"There are also negotiations between OILC and Gulf Air for the leasing of some aircraft. OILC will

buy the aircraft and lease them," it added.

Gulf Air is equally owned by Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the UAE.

Financing will be provided by some of OILC's partners and the Abu Dhabi Islamic Bank, which has just been set up with a capital of one billion dirhams (\$272.5 million), the biggest Islamic Bank capital in the world.

OILC officials were not available for comment on the Al Iqtisadi report.

British Aerospace (BAE) has subscribed 75 million dirhams (\$20.4 million) to OILC, or 15 per cent of its capital of 500 million dirhams (\$136.2 million). The rest is owned by the government and local investors.

Netanyahu to block settler enclave in Arab east Jerusalem 'for now'

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has told the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) he will stop the building of a Jewish settler enclave in the heart of Arab east Jerusalem "at this time," a move welcomed by the United States.

"As of now, the decision is not to let it go ahead and that is precisely what is going to happen," David Bar-Ilan, Mr. Netanyahu's communications chief, told Israel Radio Friday.

He said Palestinian President Yasser Arafat had received the assurance Thursday night in a telephone call from a senior Netanyahu aide, Yitzhak Molcho, and "was quite pleased to hear the explanation."

Palestinian official Nabil Shaath confirmed that Israel had contacted Mr. Arafat but did not elaborate. "A contact was made but I can't confirm who made it."

A project by American Jewish magnate, Irving Moskowitz, to build a few dozen houses in the 11,000-strong Arab neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud was given the green light by the Israeli Jerusalem municipality Thursday night.

The surprise move outraged Palestinian officials, who warned that construction could ignite Arab-Israeli violence anew.

Mr. Bar-Ilan said Mr. Netanyahu did not contest Mr. Moskowitz's right to build on the plot under Israeli law but questioned the advisability of doing so "at this time, and I stress, at this time."

Mr. Arafat's adviser, Ahmad Tibi, branded the project a "declaration of

war" in the wake of a fiercely disputed Jewish home-building project close to Arab east Jerusalem, as well as a violation of interim peace deals signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) since 1993.

Palestinian Finance Minister Mohammed Al Nashashibi said the PNA would "resist with all its possible means in order to prevent the continuation of settlements."

"The implementation of it (Ras Al Amoud) will end the peace process," Mr. Nashashibi said after the weekly Palestinian cabinet meeting Friday night in Gaza.

Mr. Netanyahu's peace talks with the PNA have been in crisis since March when Israel broke ground on the Jabal Abu Ghneim settlement in Arab east Jerusalem. Mr. Arafat has insisted that work there must stop before substantive negotiations can resume.

Mr. Bar-Ilan said Mr. Netanyahu believed the time was not right to build at Ras Al Amoud given that the project was in the midst of a densely-populated Arab neighbourhood and given the state of peace negotiations.

He said there was no question of a similar freeze at Jabal Abu Ghneim. "It's a barren hill, it's near two Jewish neighbourhoods and it is not in anyone's way," Mr. Bar-Ilan told Reuters.

The United States said Friday that Mr. Netanyahu's opposition to building in Ras Al Amoud was a positive step and appealed for a resumption of the stalled Middle East peace process.

Jordan condemns plans for new settlement in Arab east Jerusalem

AMMAN (Agencies) — Jordan condemned on Saturday Israeli plans to build a Jewish settler enclave in the heart of Arab east Jerusalem as a violation of its interim peace deal with the Palestinians.

"The Jordanian government rejects and condemns such decisions and reminds those who took it of the dangers of implementing it," acting Information Minister Nasser Lawzi told reporters after a regular cabinet meeting.

Mr. Lawzi said the decision to build a Jewish settlement in the Arab neighbourhood of Ras Al Amoud would further escalate tension between Israel and the Palestinians, "which began with the decision to build a settlement on Jabal Abu Ghneim."

"The Jordanian government considers the Israeli measures detrimental to the final status negotiations over the lands which Israel occupied in 1967," said Mr. Lawzi adding that "Jordan has been keen on the final status negotiations as provided for in the Jordan-Israel peace treaty."

He said "the Jordanian government calls on the Israeli government to pave the way for the resumption of negotiations with Palestinians for the sake of arriving at a final settlement."

"The government of Jordan appeals to the co-sponsors of the peace process and the nations supporting a peace based on justice and non-acquisition of land by force to exert serious efforts to prevent further escalation and intentional disruption of negotiations on Israeli-Syrian and Israeli-Lebanese tracks for the purpose of arriving at comprehensive peace," said Mr. Lawzi.

His Majesty King Hussein, who has expressed growing frustration with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and said he is "despairing" of the situation in the Middle East, would discuss the settlement issue with Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy in Amman on Tuesday, Mr. Lawzi said.

Mr. Netanyahu has said he will stop the Ras Al Amoud building, approved by the Israeli Jerusalem municipality, but aides stressed his reservations were over the tim-

ing, not legitimacy, of the project.

"The Jordanian government believes that Israeli measures like this violate the terms of reference of the Middle East peace process," Mr. Lawzi said. "It calls on the Israeli government to cancel these decisions and to stop building housing and settlements on any Palestinian lands occupied in 1967."

Israel captured east Jerusalem and the rest of the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East war. Palestinians look towards east Jerusalem becoming the capital of their future state.

Mr. Lawzi said the cabinet discussed an Israeli legislative bid to make it harder to return the Golan Heights, also occupied in the 1967 war, to Syria.

The legislation, which passed a preliminary reading in Israel's parliament on Wednesday by a vote of 43-40, would make approval of territorial concessions on the Golan conditional on the support of at least 80 legislators in the 120-seat Knesset.

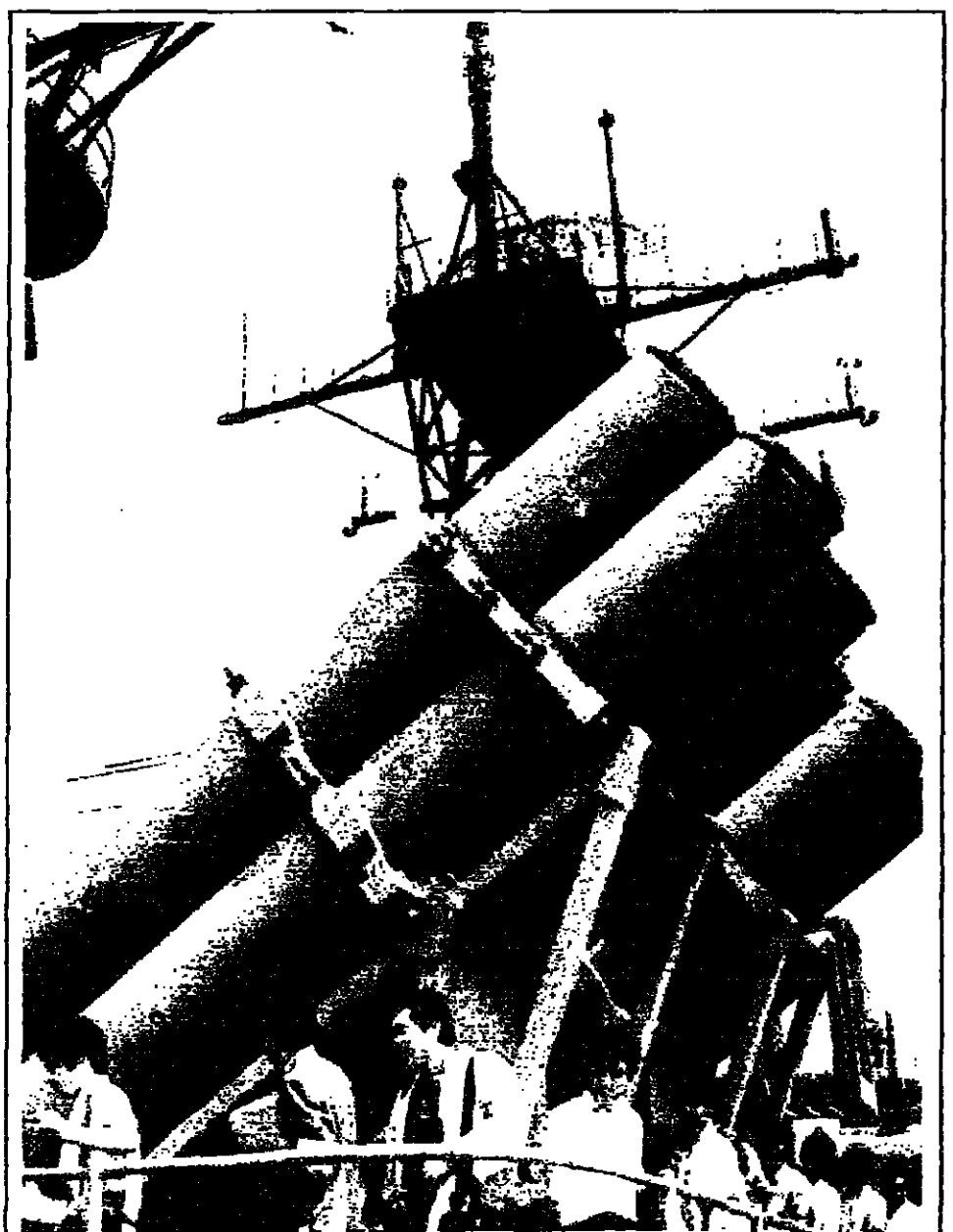
"The Jordanian government, which sees in such moves an escalation in tension, announces its rejection of everything which obstructs the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan," Mr. Lawzi said.

According to Mr. Lawzi, the Cabinet will shortly pass a decision setting a date for the general elections.

In reply to a question about whether the government will allow observers to monitor the elections, he said: "We do not prevent any group acting individually or collectively from entering Jordan within the framework of the elections law," adding that Jordan is an open country for different kinds of organisations including human rights organisation, stressing that "the government, while allowing monitoring, does not intend to organise observation on its own initiative."

He pointed out that under the Elections Law all candidates running in the elections or their representatives can monitor each ballot box and each polling station.

Mr. Lawzi said that the Ministry of Interior has allocated JD1.5 million to finance the general elections.



The United Arab Emirates wants to buy 24 of these Harpoon anti-ship missiles for \$90 million according to a press release by the U.S. Defence Department Friday. This file photo was taken August 1, 1988, showing news people passing in front of Harpoon anti-ship missiles on a U.S. battle ship in the port of Incheon. (AFP file photo)

Prince Ra'd opens medical conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Saturday opened a Jordanian-U.S. medical conference.

He announced that the meeting will mark the beginning of a series of medical and other scientific conferences between the two countries in order to increase cooperation and facilitate Jordanian medical and technological advances.

Addressing the approximately 400 delegates on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein, Prince Ra'd maintained that the number of participants and broad agenda reflect the importance which both sides attach to the deliberations.

He expressed optimism that the conference would achieve its objectives.

According to organisers, at least 250 doctors from the United States are participating in the conference in order to discuss a range of medical topics and review over 100 reports.

During the opening session, Minister of Social Development and acting Minister of Health and Medical Care Mohammad Mamsar told the assembly that the Ministry of Health has contributed a great deal towards the advancement of medical services in the Kingdom.

He noted that government-run hospitals are continually provided with

modern medical equipment and that ministry doctors receive continuing education and are offered scholarships in order to better serve the public.

Jordan Medical Association (JMA) President Basem Dajani also addressed the opening session, stating that the meeting was organised to maintain continued strong ties with other nations.

He said that the JMA is closely cooperating and exchanging expertise and consultations with medical associations in Spain, Italy and Germany.

Head of the Muslim Doctors Society in North America Nabil Hafar asserted that the five-day meeting

will focus on medical issues and education in the United States.

The presence of a large U.S. medical contingent in Jordan will help participants interact and exchange expertise and knowledge, he added.

Auxiliary to the conference, organisers displayed a medical exhibition with various medical equipment from local and foreign firms.

The conference was organised by the Jordan Medical Association in conjunction with the Muslim Doctors Society in North America and other U.S.-based medical schools.

Prime minister arrives in Oman

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, who Friday arrived in Muscat, the capital of Oman, on his way to Malaysia stated that since the new Israeli government took office last year, it has been placing major obstacles in the path of peace.

"We, in Jordan concluded a peace treaty with Israel and have recovered all rights and are now in a better position to influence the other side (Israel)

than before the 1994 peace treaty," the prime minister said.

"Currently, the region is facing difficulties, but we can see signs that the situation is easing as we believe that the peace strategy is an international option and not a tactical move," Dr. Majali asserted.

"The world is witnessing obstacles placed by the Israeli government and therefore pressure is directed towards the Israeli government to remove

obstacles and change policies," he added.

The prime minister described Jordanian-Omani relations as closely cooperative on cultural, economic and social and political levels.

Dr. Majali is accompanied on his trip by ministers of finance, health and medical care as well as a group of businessmen who will attend a meeting on economic development to be held in Kuala Lumpur.

Lesser charge requested for man accused of stabbing Israeli

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The defence team in the case of a 22-year old man, currently facing charges of attempted murder, Saturday asked the court to amend the premeditated murder charges to a lesser charge.

Hamzeh Ghareibeh is being tried at the Criminal Court for attempting to murder an Israeli tourist in the Um Qais tourist area in April.

He was arrested by authorities in Irbid on April 30 shortly after stabbing Roline B. Golan, 30, in the stomach.

Ms. Golan was part of

an Israeli group of 33 on a four-day trip to Jordan.

The defence team asked the court to take a medical report into consideration which indicated that the woman received minor injuries and that she had dropped charges before leaving the Kingdom.

Criminal Prosecutor Imad Kilani last month had asked the court to convict Mr. Ghareibeh of premeditated murder.

The court, presided over by Judge Abdul Rahman Tawfiq and Judges Khalaf Rakad and Abdul Hamid Saad, postponed the trial until August 7.

Students to begin college application process

AMMAN (J.T.) — Students who passed their tawjihi examinations can commence their college application process beginning Monday and continue until August 3, deputy chairman of a coordination committee on acceptance of students to Jordanian universities, Dr. Walid Maani announced Saturday.

Names of those students accepted to state universities will be announced during the last week of August, he added.

Acceptance procedures will follow guidelines set by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) last Monday, according to Dr. Maani.

CHE announced that the Kingdom's seven state universities will admit

15,652 students for the 1997-1998 academic year.

Of this group, 2,784 will undertake postgraduate courses and 970 students will take vocational training courses, according to CHE.

Dr. Maani affirmed that arrangements are being made for eligible students to apply for the university through post offices which then have a week to send the applications to the coordination committee for processing.

He stated that a social and humanities faculty has been established at the University of Jordan and that the faculties of economy and administrative sciences have been restructured there.

'Recent resignations no indication of IAF rift' — party leaders

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The recent resignations of five moderate leaders from the Executive Council of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) are neither the anticipation nor the outcome of a split within the front, party leaders said Saturday.

Strongly rejecting the possibility that the resignees will gather their followers to form a new Islamic party challenging the monopoly of the IAF, Islamist insiders also denied that the five leaders might run as independents.

These leaders resigned following their party's decision to boycott this November's parliamentary elections.

"[Nobody] can talk about a split (in the IAF), there are simply different points of view, which are also very well-respected," stressed Adnan Majali, president of the 120-member Shura Council, the higher decision-making body of the front.

Confirming that IAF Secretary General Ishaq Farhan, financial affairs secretary Ahmad Tanash, secretary Mohammed Awaidh, spokesperson Hamzeh Mansour, and Lower House Deputy Bassam Emoush had submitted their resignations, Mr. Majali stressed that "many efforts are being exerted to convince them to rescind their decision."

"They (the resignees) have contributed to the foundation and the development of the party," he said, emphasising that the five leaders' resignations apply to their membership in the 17-member Executive Council, and "not to their membership in the party, nor in the Shura Council."

Maintaining that "they (Dr. Farhan and his resigning colleagues) are very reasonable and keen on the party's unity," Mr. Majali strongly denied speculation that they will run in the election campaign as independents.

IAF Executive Council member

and Senator Abdul Latif Arabiyat stated "[the IAF] is a democratic organisation, and, as such, it is normal that there are different points of view and that some leaders complain about some decisions."

"The decision to [boycott] was taken in a very democratic manner, and, as leaders of a democratic movement, they (the resignees) will follow the majority's decision and not run independently," Dr. Arabiyat asserted.

Dr. Farhan and his colleagues' resignations were publicised on Thursday, at which time it was also announced that the Shura Council had resolved to boycott the elections by an overwhelming majority of 80 to 16 votes.

But according to an Islamist source, the five actually handed in their resignations earlier — after an Executive Council meeting last Saturday, when it became apparent that the option to boycott the elections would have been endorsed by a large majority vote.

"Dr. Farhan and the others handed in their resignations after last week's Executive Council meeting," Ibrahim Gharaibeh, editor-in-chief of the Islamist Al Ummah magazine, told the Jordan Times.

"They asked Mr. Majali to include their resignations in the agenda of Thursday's Shura Council meeting, but he refused, as the (Shura Council) meeting was an extraordinary one, convened solely to discuss electoral participation," Mr. Gharaibeh affirmed.

Mr. Majali confirmed that, in his capacity as Shura Council president, he received the resignation letters "a couple of days" prior to Thursday's Shura Council meeting.

"The resignations have not yet been accepted, neither has there been a chance to discuss them," Mr. Majali pointed out, declining to specify any date which may have been set to deal with the issue.

According to the IAF statute, the

body in charge of accepting or rejecting Executive Council member resignations is the Shura Council, and experts say that the deliberation should be taken during a regular session.

The IAF statute stipulates that the Shura Council be convened in an extraordinary session by an Executive Committee decision or by request of at least one-third of its members.

According to Mr. Gharaibeh, the Shura Council, which convenes in a regular session twice a year, should hold its next regular session in December, when the two-year mandate of the executive committee will expire and internal elections are to be held for a new leadership.

It is also worth noting that, according to party regulations, Dr. Farhan, having served as secretary general for four years, will not be eligible for a third term in office.

Commenting on speculations that the resigning leaders might form a new party and participate in elections, Mr. Gharaibeh ruled out such possibility emphasising Dr. Farhan's and his colleagues' loyalty and commitment to the unity of the Islamic movement.

Even given the weak possibility that the persons resigning might venture to establish a second Islamic party, Mr. Gharaibeh said, "this would be a party of leaders, but not a party of the people."

On different occasions the resignees objected in the past few weeks to the earlier decision to boycott taken this month by the Muslim Brotherhood, under which umbrella, the IAF was established.

Mr. Mansour criticised the boycott as "contrary to" the development of democracy, while Dr. Emoush objected to the justifications presented by the Brotherhood as illogical and inadequate.

Five university students shot by lone assailant

By Rana Hussein
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Five University of Jordan students were injured Saturday morning after having been shot by a 21-year old student near the Faculty of Economics and Commerce, witnesses and official sources said.

University of Jordan officials said that police are searching for the alleged assailant who apparently opened fire on a group of students on campus at approximately 11:30 a. m.

"I was standing inside the Humanities Building when I saw a student tearing off his shirt and withdrawing a gun," a 19-year-old art major told the Jordan Times. "He fired several bullets in the building, exited and then shot randomly at students near the Faculty of Commerce and Economics."

"All the students fled screaming and crying in panic," she added.

The motives behind the shooting incident were unclear, according to University of Jordan officials, but some university students blamed "old feuds between the alleged gunman and some of the injured students."

Other students maintained that the shooting incident occurred after the alleged assailant argued with another student over matters pertaining to registration.

A University of Jordan official Saturday told the Jordan Times that the motive behind the shooting is still

unknown, and that the student who reportedly committed the shooting is still at large.

"An investigation committee has been formed by the authorities and the university to investigate the shooting incident," he said.

Officials identified the injured as: Ma'en Abdullah Arabiyat, Nayef Khalil Fadel, and Susan Ahmad Nour, all 20, Usama Khreisat, 27, and Mohammad Sutary, 21. "All five students were admitted to the University of Jordan Hospital where they were treated and discharged the same day," a University of Jordan official said.

Meanwhile, two people including a six-year old child were killed and 13 others were injured in 13 accidental shooting incidents over the weekend, according to police reports.

In the Bayader area, six-year old Amal A. was mortally wounded by a bullet to her head fired by her 18-year old brother who was apparently firing the gun to celebrate his tawjihi exam results.

In Irbid, a woman, identified in police reports as Z. A., was killed after she was reportedly struck in the chest by a stray bullet while sitting in the backyard of her house.

The remaining shooting incidents occurred as a result of tawjihi students celebrating exam results, festive shootings and stray bullets.

Tri-lingual bi-monthly newspaper looks for solid launching ground in Kingdom

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Founders of a new tri-lingual, bi-monthly paper are looking for "solid territory" on which to license their publication and issue its first edition.

The paper, slated to be named, simply, "The Peace" — to be published in Arabic, English and Hebrew — was an initiative started one year ago by two Jordanians and one Israeli, who endeavoured to publish a small-scale tabloid targeting youth and introducing them to the "peace dialogue."

However, amendments to the Press and Publications Law, introduced in May, have all but promised to close the doors of most smaller weekly and monthly publications, many of which were critical of the government's peace policy.

Ironically, it seems that some of the law's new provisions may also exclude even those publications endeavouring to bolster Jordan's shaky relations with neighbouring Israel and restore public confidence in the peace process.

"We would like this paper to be established and published in Jordan," says Mahmoud Khalili, who will edit the English section. "But the new Press and Publications Law has made it difficult. The capital is very high and therefore, we are thinking of licensing and publishing it outside of Jordan."

An amendment to the 1993 Press and Publications Law required that daily and weekly newspapers raise their capital to JD 600,000 and JD 300,000 respectively, and that all new papers meet this requirement prior to receiving a licence.

"Our immediate goal is to be a non-profit paper, distributed free of charge, at first on a small scale," Mr.

Khalili stated, "and although we will receive financing from companies outside Jordan, we were thinking of starting small and, hopefully, growing."

According to Mr. Khalili, the locations which have been considered for the paper's publication are Cyprus and the United States, while the three hope to establish a regional office in Jordan.

Mr. Khalili, in partnership with Jordanian writer Tayseer Fares (who will edit the Arabic section and who also writes for the local Arabic weekly Al Nahda) and retired Israeli businessman Sam Silver, would not disclose how much, or how little, the paper's capital will be, and would only say that the three expect to receive funding from unnamed "major companies outside Jordan" and "local organisations."

The paper will target youth, and contributions to the paper will be from "the up and coming generation for whom our leaders made peace," says Mr. Khalili, who was generally reluctant to disclose information regarding the publication.

He did, however, refute arguments, from a source familiar with the project, that the paper "was not a serious one, with relatively inexperienced founders."

"We are in contact with several schools, organisations, etc., in Jordan, Israel, the United States and Germany, and we are talking about involving Arabs outside the Middle East, too," he said. "We have begun legal arrangements to publish the paper, and we are serious about our work."

Mr. Khalili said he expects to publish the first issue in three months time.

WHAT'S GOING ON

JERASH FESTIVAL

Performance by the National Folk Dance Ensemble of the State Theatre of Jordan at the Jerash Festival. The festival is held in Jerash, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and features a variety of cultural activities including music, dance, and theatre. The festival is organized by the Ministry of Culture and is a major event in the Jordanian calendar.

EXHIBITIONS

Exhibition of the National Folk Dance Ensemble of the State Theatre of Jordan at the Jerash Festival. The exhibition is held in the Jerash Museum and features a variety of folk dances and costumes from different regions of Jordan.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Srou visits Lebanon

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Sa'd Hayel Srou today begins an official visit to Lebanon to hold talks with his Lebanese counterpart, Nabih Berri, and other senior Lebanese officials.

Prince urges training for the disabled

AMMAN (Petra) — HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Saturday called for the rehabilitation and training of disabled persons. During a visit to the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC), Prince Ra'd urged focus on the disabled in order to rehabilitate them to better serve themselves and their country.

Masri meets with Malaysian minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Education and Higher Education Munther Masri Saturday met with Malaysian Minister of State for Prime Ministry Affairs Abdul Hamid Othman and the two reviewed educational cooperation between Jordan and Malaysia. They discussed means of increasing the number of Malaysian students at Jordanian universities. According to Dr. Masri, the number of Malaysian students in Jordan is approximately 1,611.

Khmer Rouge condemns and sentences Pol Pot

PHNOM PENH (R) — Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrilla group said in a radio broadcast Saturday that former leader Pol Pot had been condemned and sentenced for unspecified crimes.

The radio, monitored in Phnom Penh, said Mr. Pol Pot had been condemned for serious deeds against the people and the nation, but did not say what his sentence was.

"Thousands of people held a meeting to condemn and sentence Pol Pot... (for his) serious and rebellious deeds against the people and the nation," the radio said.

The radio did not say if Mr. Pol Pot was present at the meeting, but broadcast sounds of the crowd denouncing him.

Mr. Pol Pot was the mastermind of the 1975-79 "killing fields" reign of terror during which more than a million Cambodians were executed or died of starvation, disease, or hard labour.

The Khmer Rouge underwent a violent split in June and days later Mr. Pol Pot was denounced over Khmer Rouge radio and later hunted down and captured by his former comrades.

Khmer Rouge political leader Khieu Samphan announced over the radio on July 5 that Mr. Pol Pot was politically finished and that the guerrillas recognised the

Cambodian constitution.

A commander at the rebels' Anlong Veng base in northern Cambodia said in the Saturday broadcast that the Khmer Rouge could no longer be called the "Pol Pot regime."

"Now our movement is no longer the so-called Pol Pot regime," the commander, identified as Kham Ngon, said in the broadcast.

"We will not follow this regime any more and we have to destroy this regime in order to liberate our people," the commander said.

First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh was negotiating with the Khmer Rouge faction that broke with Mr. Pol Pot to secure the guerrilla leader's handover.

But the bloody takeover and ouster of Prince Ranariddh on July 6 by Second Prime Minister Hun Sen brought those talks to an abrupt end.

Prince Ranariddh said earlier he was willing to form an alliance with Mr. Khieu Samphan, infuriating Mr. Hun Sen, who analysts said wanted to prevent any deal that would bolster his rival's position.

Mr. Hun Sen declared the prince's negotiations with the Khmer Rouge illegal and justified his move against Prince Ranariddh's forces on July 5 by saying Prince Ranariddh's military commanders were bringing defectors from the guerrilla

group into the capital.

Mr. Hun Sen and Prince Ranariddh agreed in late June that if Mr. Pol Pot was ever handed over to the government he should be brought before an international court.

The new Cambodian government still wants to try to bring Mr. Pol Pot to justice before an international court, a senior government official said Wednesday.

The guerrillas' clandestine radio, its main propaganda mouthpiece, has broadcast attacks on Mr. Hun Sen since his ouster of Prince Ranariddh, condemning him as a puppet of Vietnam.

The Khmer Rouge boycotted a 1993 election because they said the former Hanoi-backed government, led by Mr. Hun Sen, was not dismantled as stipulated in a Paris peace agreement.

In recent years, many rebels defected to the government.

Meanwhile, at a joint news conference with U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in Kuala Lumpur Saturday, Chinese Foreign Minister Qian Qichen said that China was "deeply concerned about what recently took place in Cambodia."

"Cambodia already achieved national reconciliation and had established a coalition government, so we do not wish to see the eruption of armed conflict and

bloodshed after all that."

"Although between the different parties and between different leaders they might have contradictions and disagreements, we hope they can resolve their disagreements through peaceful means," Mr. Qian said.

Ms. Albright said Cambodia was one of the topics she would discuss with Mr. Qian during a meeting which followed the 30-minute news conference.

They are in Kuala Lumpur to attend the annual ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) security conference Sunday and hold meetings with the various ASEAN members and other major Asian and Western states.

ASEAN, the Association of South East Asian Nations, comprises Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Brunei, Vietnam, the Philippines and newly-joined Burma and Laos.

The Chinese foreign minister did not directly answer a question as to whether Beijing could work with Mr. Hun Sen, a former Vietnamese protégé.

"Our consistent position is not to interfere in other countries' internal affairs, but we wish to see that they (the Cambodians) will be able to work out their problem through peaceful means," he said.

Stampede in Kashmir injures 60 worshippers

SRINAGAR (Agencies) — At least 60 Muslim worshippers were injured Friday in a stampede in Kashmir's holiest shrine when police used batons to disperse a group trying to enter the shrine.

Witnesses said shoes and stones were thrown at the chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir state, Farooq Abdullah, when he arrived to take part in a gathering of 250,000 Kashmiris at the Hazratbal Shrine on the occasion of Idd-Milad-U-Nabi (Prophet's Birthday).

"More than 60 people were injured in a stampede when police used batons against people who tried to disrupt the prayers," a police official told Reuters.

Altaf Ahmad, an eyewitness, told Reuters that people shouted pro-freedom and anti-Farooq Abdullah slogans.

More than a dozen militant groups are fighting New Delhi's rule in Jammu and Kashmir, India's only Muslim-majority state.

Police and hospitals say over 20,000 people have been killed in the Himalayan region since the rebellion broke out in 1990.

Separatists and Mr. Abdullah put the toll near 50,000. "About 40 persons attempted to disturb the peaceful congregation as soon as the Friday prayers were about to commence," an official statement said.

Security was beefed up following reports that leaders of the all parties Hurriyat (Freedom) Conference, Kashmir's leading separatist alliance, would address the congregation, police said.

The Hazratbal on the banks of the green waters of Dal Lake is the repository of what Kashmir Muslims believe is a hair from the beard of Prophet Mohammad.

Three Hurriyat leaders were detained by the police outside the shrine before Friday prayers, police said.

"Mohammad Yasin Malik, Professor Abdul Gani Lone and Javed Ahmad Mir were detained for precautionary

measures," a police official said.

"Three other senior Hurriyat leaders, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, Abdullah Gani Lone and Moulvi Abbas Ansari, were placed under house arrest Thursday evening," a Hurriyat statement said.

Meanwhile, Indian Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral visited Kashmir Saturday as a strike called by Muslim separatists crippled life in the Himalayan region, witnesses said.

The prime minister after arriving here left amid heavy security for the region of Qazigund to flag off the laying of rail lines which will link Kashmir with rest of India, officials said.

He was accompanied by Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah and other officials, they added.

Shops, businesses and offices, meanwhile, remained closed in Srinagar following the general strike enforced by the all party Freedom Conference, an umbrella forum of Kashmiri

guerrilla and political organisations.

The conference has urged residents to boycott Mr. Gujral's, maiden two-day visit to the troubled state because of atrocities committed by Indian soldiers in Kashmir.

Roads remained deserted but hundreds of soldiers and police lined the streets to prevent protests and violence during Mr. Gujral's visit, the witnesses said.

A similar shutdown was also ordered by the militants elsewhere in Kashmir.

The conference has said Mr. Gujral's visit was like "sprinkling salt on the wounds" of Kashmiris.

"The government led by Gujral has, through its security forces, let loose a reign of terror in Kashmir. Innocent people are being killed and arrested everyday," it said.

Mr. Gujral will hold talks with Mr. Abdullah and other government leaders in Kashmir, where the conflict has killed more than 20,000 people since 1989.

Sri Lankan forces kill 33 Tamil Tigers

COLOMBO (AFP) — The Sri Lankan navy killed at least 30 Tamil Tiger rebels in a fierce sea battle off the island's north coast as three more rebels died in a major ground offensive, the Defence Ministry said Saturday.

Navy gun boats swung into action off the northeastern district of Trincomalee Friday, heavily damaging at least six boats of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the ministry said.

"During the confrontation, naval troops confirm at least 30 terrorists were killed and 30 wounded," the ministry said in a statement. It did not give any naval casualties.

However, defence sources said at least two sailors were injured in the intense battle and a navy gunboat

was damaged during a rebel counter-attack.

"Two boats with (LTTE) suicide cadres escaped naval gun fire and fled to safety," the ministry said adding that another seven Tiger boats managed to escape the navy assault.

The latest navy action came as thousands of army troops kept up a major offensive against the LTTE in the north of the country.

Helicopter gun ships were called in Friday to neutralise LTTE mortar bomb positions near the town of Nedunkerni, the ministry said.

It said three rebels were shot dead by ground troops in the same region Friday, raising the military estimate for Tiger losses in a 24 hour period to 33.

There was no immediate reaction from the LTTE to

the latest fighting in the north.

Security across the country has been stepped up this month amid fears of Tiger bomb attacks to mark a series of anniversaries in the country's drawn out Tamil separatist war which has claimed over 50,000 lives since 1972.

The navy has stepped up patrols in Sri Lanka's northern and eastern coastal areas after rebels hijacked a North Korean cargo vessel in the north this month.

The rebels also threatened to attack merchant vessels taking supplies to the northern Jaffna Peninsula, the former Tigers stronghold captured by security forces in December 1995.

The Tigers say the transport of food and other commodities to the region was in fact supplying the mili-

tary campaign against them.

The Colombo government has asked the International Red Cross to protect ships taking supplies to civilians but officials said they were still awaiting a response.

The navy, in the meantime, is providing tighter security to merchant ships and was on alert for rebel arms shipments, a Defence Ministry spokesman here said.

Tiger guerrillas are known to own and operate several cargo ships of their own but one of their vessels was intercepted and sunk by the Indian navy in January 1993 together with nine top Tiger cadres.

The Tigers are leading a guerrilla campaign to establish an independent homeland in Sri Lanka's northeast where the two million Tamil minority is concentrated.

U.K. reviews army ban on frontline role for women

LONDON (R) — Britain might end a ban on women serving in front-line combat roles to help overcome a recruitment crisis in its armed forces, Defence Minister George Robertson said Saturday.

Mr. Robertson said his ministry was examining whether the traditional reasons for barring women from front-line duty — including fitness and combat cohesiveness — still made sense.

"If a woman wants to do it and is fit enough and it does not compromise combat effectiveness, then perhaps we should look again at modern attitudes to these things," he told BBC Radio.

The policy that women do not serve in the front line of armoured and infantry regiments means that 47 per cent of

posts in Britain's army are closed to women.

In the air force and navy, by contrast, 96 per cent and 74 per cent of posts respectively are open to women.

Mr. Robertson, who was impressed on a recent visit to Bosnia by the number of women serving in the British peacekeeping forces there, said he had no objection in principle to extending their role.

"We've got to make sure that the armed forces of this country are seen to be up to date, to be modern, enlightened and fair... and that's why the role of women is so important."

"I think that as many positions should be open to as many people as possible. What we're obliged to look at is the practical impact of our policies," he said.

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Hundreds of Burmese Rohingya refugees squat and lie on a street outside their camp at Kutupalong in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar district Friday protesting against "forced repatriation" by Bangladesh authorities to their homes in west Burma's Arakan province. The U.N. relief agency UNHCR has also lodged a complaint with the Bangladeshi government against forcible return on the Rohingyas. The repatriation has now been postponed indefinitely (Reuters photo)

Burmese refugees flood into Bangladesh

RUMALIRCHHARA (R) — Abdur Rahman and his nine-member family spent several nights in hideouts avoiding the attention of Burmese border guards before sneaking into Bangladesh in search of a safe haven.

Mr. Rahman, 60, is one of hundreds of people now living in Rumalirchhara village in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar district, bordering west Burma's Muslim-majority province of Arakan.

He is one of the "Rohingyas," the scores of thousands of Burmese Muslims who have fled their homeland to escape what they say is relentless persecution by Burma's military rulers.

The plight of the Rohingyas is once again drawing international attention after Bangladesh was charged with forcibly repatriating the immigrants.

"We crossed the Naf (border river) in a fishing boat two months ago," said Mr. Rahman.

"Then we boarded a bus to escape the eyes of Bangladesh police, and a local guide helped us to Rumalirchhara," he told Reuters.

His son, Sayedur, pulls a rickshaw in Cox's Bazar town and earns a living for Mr. Rahman's family.

Police could not track him down. Rohingyas are similar in appearance to local residents and speak almost the same language, which is a mixture of Arakan and a local Bengali dialect.

"We had a very tormentful life in Burma. It's a nightmare," Mr. Rahman said.

"We were forced to work at labour camps without pay. Moreover, two-thirds of whatever crops we had grown were taken away by the military junta," said Mr. Rahman's neighbour, Nazu Meah.

He said he was better off in Bangladesh by doing casual jobs. "Besides, I no longer have to spend sleepless nights in fear of someone kicking at my doors and dragging someone from my family out like animals," Mr. Meah said.

Mr. Dil Mohammad arrived in Bangladesh about a week ago with his 10-member family, but has yet to find a job.

"I am afraid to move around because police may get hold of me and force me back into Burma. That would be bad luck," he told Reuters.

Police Superintendent Matiar Rahman in Cox's Bazar said Rohingyas were flooding into Bangladesh, and law enforcement agents were hunting them down to send them back across the Naf.

He said more than 2,000 newly arrived Rohingyas had been pushed back in the past few months. Other sources said a further 15,000 or more had found their way into the country safely, escaping police and border guards.

The new influx began as poverty-ridden Bangladesh was still waiting to repatriate some 21,000 Burmese refugees, the remnants of about 250,000 Rohingyas who entered the country in 1992.

Those fleeing Burma recently have given the same reasons for leaving, but Bangladeshi officials insist the Rohingyas are mostly economic refugees and must go back.

The repatriation process had often been stopped as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) complained that Bangladesh was using force to send the Rohingyas back home.

The alleged forcible deportations last Sunday sparked violence in refugee camps and a protest Wednesday from the UNHCR to Bangladesh Foreign Minister Abdus Samad Azad.

This has forced Bangladesh authorities to postpone the repatriation process once again.

Albright sees uphill battle on Cambodia

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — U.S. envoy Stephen Solarz found some flexibility among key players in the Cambodian crisis, including strongman Hun Sen, but believes that achieving a settlement is an uphill battle, a U.S. official said Saturday.

Mr. Solarz, chosen by Secretary of State Madeleine Albright to undertake a fact-finding mission to Asia on the Cambodia crisis, reported to her Saturday.

The U.S. goal is to work with the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on its initiative to find a political solution in Cambodia, where Mr. Hun Sen, the country's second prime minister, on July 6 ousted Prince Norodom Ranariddh, the first prime minister.

Mr. Solarz is "not overly optimistic that an agreement will be achieved," said the U.S. official who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity.

But he is more encouraged than when he began his mission.

The U.S. side is encouraged that ASEAN has undertaken a serious initiative to try to forge a political settlement between the rival parties in Cambodia, U.S. officials said.

One official called the ASEAN initiative the "best and perhaps last chance" for peacefully resolving the crisis, and said the United States could not be successful if it took on such a challenge by itself.

Because of ASEAN's role in the 1991 Paris Accords that brought peace to Cambodia and its growing regional

importance, the group has "presumptive standing" on this issue, he said.

Ms. Albright was to meet later with foreign ministers from the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand who are leading ASEAN's Cambodia initiative.

Mr. Solarz's conversations with key Cambodian players suggested some flexibility, the official added.

For instance, Prince Ranariddh has indicated that he would be able to accept a replacement as first prime minister as long as he makes the appointment, not Mr. Hun Sen, the official said.

Also, Mr. Hun Sen indicated he may be willing to demobilise local militias and support a move to bar national military officers from holding political party positions, he said.

But implementing these changes and undertaking still others pose serious obstacles to any agreement, the official said.

Among those is ensuring that Prince Ranariddh and other political exiles can return to Cambodia in time for elections expected in May 1998, and neutralising a national army controlled by Mr. Hun Sen so his political opponents can feel secure, the official said.

"The military is the ultimate guarantor of Hun Sen's ability to remain in power. He won't easily give up that trump card," the official said.

Prince Ranariddh and other exiles asked that the international community guarantee their security once back in Cambodia, but Mr. Solarz was cool to that idea, the official said.

U.S. scientists produce human stem cells

BALTIMORE (R) — Scientists at Johns Hopkins University have developed the first laboratory cultures of human stem cells — unspecialised cells that can grow to form all the different cells and tissues of the body.

The breakthrough may pave the way to the eventual laboratory production of human tissues, such as heart muscle or nerve cells, that have been lost to disease or injury, the researchers said in a release issued late Friday.

It could also allow scientists to introduce changes into the genetic code that are passed from one generation to the next, although any such research would be prohibited at Johns Hopkins.

Such "germline" mutations have already been produced in mice.

"We will not perform any experiments aimed at genetically engineering the human germline in my lab or anywhere at Hopkins — it is not ethically acceptable," said Doctor John D. Gearhart, a professor of gynecology and obstetrics at Johns Hopkins and lead researcher on the project.

The developments were first disclosed during a session on the ethics of cloning and stem cell research at a recent international congress of developmental biology.

Dr. Gearhart said he had chosen the forum so the process of establishing ethical guidelines for this type of research could begin immediately.

The human stem cell cultures were developed from tissues obtained as a result of pregnancy termination, Johns Hopkins said.



Water of the Oder River bursts through a broken dyke near the German village of Aurth, Friday. Large areas along the swollen Oder had to be evacuated as floods which have already wreaked havoc in neighbouring Poland and the Czech Republic poured into Germany (Reuters photo)

Rainstorms raise fears of new floods on Oder

HOHENWUTZEN (R) — Thousands of German soldiers laboured into the early hours Saturday to stave off one of the worst floods in memory as rainstorms raised fears the river dividing Germany and Poland would rise higher.

In a westward bend in the Oder River, the village of Hohenwutzen looked more like a battlefield than an agrarian community located at the northern end of the Oderbruch Plateau, laid dry in the 18th century by Frederick the Great.

The plateau was the breadbasket of the region during Prussian times and later in Communist East Germany, cut off from the West by the cold war divide. But now floods that have left around 100 people dead in past weeks in neighbouring Poland and the Czech Republic were causing the Oder dykes to crumble and threatened to flood the fertile plain with unforeseeable consequences for the region.

Faded green army tents dot the fields and flood-

lights glare into the night as nearly one thousand soldiers, hundreds of aid workers and local villagers furiously stuffed sandbags to plug each new leak as it appeared.

Fewer than 500 residents from a population of some 5,000 in the Oderbruch plains remained in their homes. The rest were evacuated to neighbouring towns to stay with friends and family or find refuge in public shelters.

After working throughout the day, soldiers had plugged the most vulnerable spots in the dykes.

But then it started raining. In the distance lightning flashed orange in the sky, lighting up tree-tops that stood submerged in the river.

Villagers felt betrayed, recalling how Communist leadership failed to heed warnings in the 1980s and declined to reinforce the Oder dykes. The flood now seemed certain to destroy what progress had been made in the seven years since German unity.

"Now it's raining again," sighed Torsten Gauer, staring defeated at the muddy river and cradling his six-month-old baby. "It can't hold. During the times of the (Communist) East Germany nothing was done. There's no way the dyke can stand this pressure for so long."

About 1,500 German border guards helped emergency operations with 65 helicopters and 100 boats. A further 5,400 soldiers were in the region to help out — the army's largest peacetime operation since World War II.

Germany has so far escaped the worst of the region's flooding, the most serious in centuries.

Military officials rushed about barking orders to subordinate as truckload after truckload of sand was driven up to the critical spot in the bend of the Oder that officials were uncertain would hold overnight.

Earlier, First Lieutenant Joerg Kiehl described how the soldiers hoped they could hold back the flood,

the worst in some 50 years, by erecting a secondary dyke behind the weak points in the sagging wall.

He pointed out over the plains that stretch several kilometres to the next dyke and spread out south another 50 kilometres and said: "If we are not able to stop the water here then all of this area will be flooded."

Should the dyke break, there would be nothing to stop the river from rushing into the plains, overrunning farms and villages until, some 12 kilometres westward, the tide reaches the outskirts of Bad Freienwalde, a city with 16,000 residents.

Further south, water submerged two villages after dykes holding back the Oder burst in two places.

As the water rushed into Wiesbaden, south of Frankfurt An Der Oder, only the tops of houses were left above the waterline and residents reluctantly gave in to the flood.

"We are saying farewell to our farm, that's the way it is," said local Jorg Boettke.

Scuffle at start of opposition rally in Kenya

MOMBASA (R) — A rally by an estimated 5,000 people demanding political reforms began in Kenya's Indian Ocean tourist centre of Mombasa Saturday with a scuffle.

Witnesses said about 20 youths wielding wooden pick-axe handles waded into a crowd at the rally site in the centre of Mombasa but were beaten back by other youths throwing stones.

In another incident, Emmanuel Maitha, a politician with the ruling Kenya African National Union (KANU) Party, and several supporters were manhandled and ejected from the rally site by youths.

Organisers of the rally said over loudspeakers Mr. Maitha had a gun but was disarmed and the weapon would be shown to the crowd, which swelled to about 5,000 people as the meeting started.

Three detachments of riot police patrolled Mombasa. Under international pressure, the government moved

Friday to head off clashes between riot police and demonstrators at the Mombasa rally by issuing a permit for the Saturday meeting.

Organisers said they had not applied for a licence. The rally was called by an alliance of opposition-backed groups demanding constitutional reforms that would reduce the power of President Daniel Arap Moi, 73 and in power for 19 years.

"Moi must go, Moi must go," opposition supporters chanted at the rally in Mombasa, which is at the heart of Kenya's tourism industry, its main source of foreign revenue and its leading employer. It is also Kenya's main port and second city.

At least nine people were killed on July 7 in Nairobi and several other cities and towns in battles between police and demonstrators in Kenya's worst civil unrest for seven years.

A permit for Saturday's rally was issued in the name

of leading dissident Sheikh Khalid Balala when he visited a local administrator to ask him of the meeting and to ask for security to be provided.

"I am very shocked that a licence has been issued in my name. I did not make an application and this licence should therefore not be considered lawful," Mr. Balala told Reuters.

Mr. Moi said on July 16 that permits for rallies would automatically be granted except in exceptional cases. But rally organisers still had to apply for the licences in advance.

On Thursday, Mr. Moi ordered police not to beat up ordinary protesters at rallies and said "even the offending people should not be beaten if they break the law, they should be arrested."

The United States Friday welcomed a government plan for talks with the opposition and political reforms before a general election. It said it was essential pre-election rallies and other

events remained peaceful. No date has been set for polls.

Diplomats said Friday that 22 foreign embassies and high commissions in Kenya had urged Mr. Moi in a letter to pursue dialogue with the opposition to avoid more political violence.

Adding to pressure on Mr. Moi's government, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has given it a week to demonstrate strong management and make commitments of accountability or lose a large annual loan.

The IMF gave Kenya a three-year loan package worth a total of \$205 million in April last year, but regular payments were made conditional on Kenya meeting promises on reform issues.

The independent Daily Nation newspaper said Saturday the IMF was insisting that everyone involved in the multi-million dollar Goldenberg financial scandal should be held accountable.

Key West celebrates the importance of being Ernest

KEY WEST (R) — Elderly men with white beards and hefty paunches — like "Papa" Hemingway — amble down Duval Street or quench their thirst in Sloppy Joe's Bar with beer that is as cold as the mountain streams.

This weekend they have descended on Key West to honour Ernest Hemingway, its legendary former resident, in the streets and bars where the writer caroused in the 1930s.

A look-alike contest is again the highlight of the annual fiesta. But this year there is a combative air that Hemingway would probably have savoured.

Organisers earlier this year fought a bruising battle with Hemingway's sons, who said the boozy Key West event dishonoured the late Nobel laureate's legacy

by portraying him as a 'jlob and a bum'.

They demanded a share of the profits in return for their blessing. Organisers cancelled the festival, held since 1981.

But after the Hemingway family announced an alternative celebration in Sanibel, an upscale resort on Florida's west coast, Key West decided it was better to have than have not and said the festival would go ahead after all.

"We're delighted to honour Hemingway again and we don't intend to have any less fun this year," festival director Carol Shaughnessy told Reuters. "We've always presented a blend celebrating him as a literary icon as well as his lifestyle."

"Hemingway wrote very serious things but he always had a good time here. He is

indelibly tied to Key West. His legacy is what began Key West's literary renaissance and the people and the lifestyle contributed to his writing," she said.

The festival also features an arm-wrestling competition, literary events and a mock running of the bulls after the San Fermin Festival in Pamplona, Spain, which Hemingway wrote about in *The Sun Also Rises*.

"He was one of America's greatest writers," said John Peterson, a former winner of the look-alike contest and now one of its judges. "He is one of America's greatest writers but people who knew him in Key West have testified to his lifestyle."

Mr. Peterson spoke as he helped a squad of Hemingway, ways, all resembling the writer in his later years and

mostly dressed in khaki shorts and baseball caps, guide tourists round his Key West haunts.

Asked about the desire to look like Hemingway, Mr. Peterson, a 58-year-old bar manager from Islamorada in the Florida Keys, said: "It's a fun thing. I'm kind of honoured I look like him. I grew a beard and thought 'hey, I got older and greyer and then it hit. I take advantage of it. Why not?'"

At Sloppy Joe's on Duval Street, look-alike Jim McGill from Hollywood, Florida, nursed a morning beer at the bar.

"Hemingway should be in the public domain," he said of the dispute.

Mr. McGill, a retired journalist, said he had been taking part in Hemingway look-alike contests since 1992.

Anti-Taleban forces launch jet, artillery strikes on Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — Opposition forces maintained military pressure on Kabul with jet and artillery bombardments Saturday, while calling for a Taleban militia pullout from the capital, witnesses reported.

In a statement the United Islamic Front for the Salvation of Afghanistan (UIFSA) called on the Taleban Islamic militia "to demilitarise Kabul" so that issues like a ceasefire and exchange of prisoners could be negotiated.

UIFSA, whose troops have advanced to within rocket range of Kabul, have also kept up jet attacks against the Muslim militants who have occupied the Afghan capital for exactly 10 months.

"Just minutes after a jet said this morning, rockets landed in Qal'ai Moosa and south of Khair Khana Pass," witnesses told AFP.

At 7:45 a.m. (0315 GMT) anti-aircraft fire signalled the presence of an anti-Taleban jet but the frontlines 25 kilometres distant, and not the city itself, appeared to be the target.

The early incoming rockets reportedly exploded in Qal'ai Moosa, south of the airport, and near the foot of the northwestern Khair Khan Pass where the so-called old road exits Kabul to the frontlines.

More rockets thundered into Kabul just before 10:30

a.m. (0500 GMT) and a salvo of at least eight exploded in the vicinity of the airport sending huge plumes of dust and debris skywards.

Taleban guards reported no casualties and the airport was still functional for air force flights. Neither the United Nations nor the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) still fly to Kabul.

For the past two days there has been no significant change in these frontlines which were reported to be still around Hossein Kot village.

Journalists are prevented by Taleban guards at the Khair Khana checkpoint from visiting the frontline fighting, which makes independent verification of often conflicting claims very difficult.

The bulk of the expatriate humanitarian aid community has evacuated Kabul by road for the Pakistani border, as opposition forces were poised to close in on the capital.

The United Nations, ICRC and foreign humanitarian aid workers in the health and medical sectors have stayed in Kabul, where Pakistan still maintains the only functioning diplomatic mission.

There was no clear indication Saturday that UIFSA forces, under Commander Ahmad Shah Masood,

would attempt to storm the capital, Western analysts said.

The anti-Taleban coalition's foreign minister, Mr. Abdulrahim Ghafoorzehi, confirmed Friday that Mr. Masood was commanding opposition forces north of Kabul in an interview with a Swiss newspaper published Friday.

Mr. Ghafoorzehi suggested in the Tribune de Geneve that immediate peace talks were possible if the fundamentalist Muslim militia clears out of Kabul.

"If they evacuate the city, we are ready to immediately begin peace talks," he said, adding that the Taleban have rejected such a proposal.

But analysts said it was more likely that Mr. Masood would try to build a strong defensive ring around the capital and put increasing military pressure on the Taleban to leave. The anti-Taleban opposition has given no deadline for its Kabul demilitarisation demand.

The Taleban meantime can be expected to mount a counter-offensive to drive Mr. Masood's troops back to their native bases at the mouth of the Salang and Panjsher valleys to the north of Kabul, analysts said.

One of the main problems facing Mr. Masood is a lack of coordination between

him and his opposition allies, the ethnic Uzbeks under General Abdul Malik and the Shiite religious faction of Karim Khalili, analysts said.

In a separate development, Amnesty International demanded Friday that Afghanistan's Taleban government release up to 2,000 men whom they claim were taken from their homes and are being held in prison.

The international human rights group said it had received information that the fundamentalist Islamic government had arrested the men from the Tajik and Hazara minorities over the past few days.

"There have been no reports that these men were involved in fighting. Information received indicates that these men have been detained solely because of their identity as minority Tajik and Hazaras," the group said in a statement.

"We would therefore consider them prisoners of conscience and demand their immediate and unconditional release."

Amnesty said the men were being held in appalling conditions, had limited access to food and were reportedly being beaten and ill-treated.

It also believed that they were detained to deter their family members from joining opposition forces.

Brazilian left takes over streets in protest

SAO PAULO (R) — The homeless, landless and jobless took to the streets across Brazil Friday to protest at the government and its reformist, free-market policies, officials said.

A spokeswoman for the Public Security Office in the bustling metropolis of Sao Paulo said 2,000 leftist demonstrators had taken over one of the city's main thoroughfares, the Avenida Paulista.

At the city's Roads Department, an official said several thousand more protesters, marching slowly towards the venue of the main rally, had caused 30-kilometre-long traffic jams.

"So far it's been super calm. We've not had a single incident of trouble," the Public Security Office spokeswoman said.

In other cities across Brazil, left-wing parties joined forces with Latin America's largest trade union confederation, CUT, and groups representing the homeless, landless and destitute to protest at the laissez-faire economic policies of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso and his government in a demonstration called "Open Your Eyes Brazil."

Six thousand police officers were on duty in Sao Paulo alone to ensure order, with up to 15,000 protesters expected on the Avenida Paulista.

In the capital Brasilia, unionists had hoped to draw the support of the military, reported to be grumbling about its poor salaries. But eye witnesses said only a handful of union hardliners showed up.

In Rio De Janeiro, local news agencies reported that members of the militant landless movement, which claims to represent nearly four million homeless families, took to the streets waving the movement's red flag and demanding speedier agrarian reform.

Mr. Cardoso, whose government has presided over a three-year-old economic stabilisation plan that has brought chronic hyperinflation under control, travelled Friday to the southern state of Mato Grosso do Sul where officials tightened security amid trade union threats to greet him with violent protests.

U.S. Senate puts condition on global warming pact

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. Senate unanimously warned the Clinton administration Friday to reject a global warming treaty unless it forces developing countries to join industrialised ones in fighting heat-trapping pollution.

The resolution, which also said the United States should reject a treaty that harms its economy, passed 95-0.

The White House will need Senate confirmation of the treaty it is negotiating with other countries to cut pollution from the burning of fossil fuels, which is blamed for warming the atmosphere.

"The Byrd-Hagel Resolution is a complete rejection of the Berlin Mandate negotiated by the Clinton administration in 1995 that exempts more than 130 developing nations, including China, Mexico, South Korea, India and Singapore," Nebraska Republican Chuck Hagel, a co-sponsor of the measure, said.

The Berlin Mandate, agreed to by the United States and other industrialised countries, calls on them to make a commitment to meet targets to reduce pollution on the grounds that they are responsible for almost all the existing buildup of carbon gases. Developing countries would not face binding limits.

"Unfortunately, a fundamental error — I would use the word 'blunder' — was made in Berlin in that only the so-called developed nations ... were to impose a legally binding regime on themselves. Developing nations got a free pass," West Virginia Democrat Robert Byrd, the measure's other main sponsor, said.

"I do not think the Senate should support a treaty that requires only half the world, i.e. the developed countries, to endure the economic costs of reducing emissions while developing countries are free to pollute the atmosphere and in so doing siphon off American industries," Senator Byrd added. His coal-producing state would be affected by pollution controls.

Under-Secretary of State

Tim Wirth said he did not see the resolution as a repudiation of the administration's stance in the climate change talks. Instead, he said, it should bolster the United States as it tries to push European nations and others to include developing countries in the treaty.

"The developed countries are going to have specific commitments, and we think the developing countries should have them as well, and this strengthens our hand," Mr. Wirth told Reuters.

A number of other countries have said including developing countries in the treaty would only ensure its failure and would be unfair, as they have not caused the problem or benefited yet from industrialisation.

The U.S. position is to call on developing countries that have rapidly growing emissions to agree to negotiate binding limits that they would adopt by 2005. In the meantime, it calls on them to use measures such as better energy efficiency and conservation, which should benefit their economies.

U.S. officials uncover new deaf-mute immigrant exploitation ring

WASHINGTON (AFP) — U.S. authorities raided two homes in North Carolina Friday and found a second group of deaf-mute Mexican immigrants forced to sell trinkets as virtual slaves, the Justice Department said.

The discovery came after police in New York last week discovered 55 deaf-mute illegal Mexican immigrants who had been forced to sell cheap key chains on the subway.

Authorities also said they were questioning 11 deaf Mexican nationals in Chicago but that they had not yet determined whether they were linked to the scandal.

Police and immigration officials in Sanford, North Carolina raided two homes where they found nine men, five women and three minors. All of the adults were deaf-mute, the department said in a statement.

"We don't know if there is any connection between the two cases," said U.S. Prosecutor Walter Holton.

The immigrants will remain in the Charlotte Hotel during the investigation, said Chris Sale, a deputy

commissioner for the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (INS).

"Our top priority is to ensure they receive proper care," he said. "None will be deported until we are sure that that is what is best for them."

A tip on the North Carolina case came from the Mexican consulate in Michigan, said Mr. Sale.

Mexico's Roman Catholic Church condemned the abuse of the deaf-mutes by what Genaro Alamilla, bishop emeritus of Papanla, Veracruz, called "mafias from both countries who smuggle the handicapped to exploit them." In an acidic aside, the prelate noted that the United States had stolen a huge chunk of Mexico's territory in a 1846-1848 war and that the story of enslavement was "nothing new."

The bishop of Puebla, Mario Espinosa, said he regretted that most of the deaf-mutes came from his state. "They were found here, tricked, kidnapped and convinced to leave their homes," he said.

In the New York case,

seven Mexicans were arrested on suspicion of having smuggled the deaf-mutes into California and then on to New York.

Four were charged with extortion, grand larceny and harbouring and transporting undocumented immigrants.

The 55 deaf-mute victims are staying at a hotel near New York's La Guardia Airport and being monitored by the INS.

"We are investigating any linkage between New York and North Carolina but cannot reflect this or any other aspect of the ongoing investigation at this point," said Mr. Sale.

There was still another ring in Chicago, Mexican authorities said, and the INS said it questioned nine adults and two children there, all deaf Mexican nationals. It said, however, that no arrests were made in Chicago. The Justice Department said the North Carolina immigrants had been transported to nearby Charlotte and that a Mexican embassy official had accompanied them.

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Time for the saga to come to an end

WHEN JORDANIANS all over the Kingdom took to the streets honking their cars and firing their guns as if in a wedding, there was more to the celebrations than winning a football match between two brotherly states, especially concerning the "brotherly" aspect of relations between Kuwait and Jordan.

The frustration Jordanians feel as a result of the lingering side effects of the Gulf War, since 1991, is only enhanced by the very slow return of warmth between the two countries and news of strong resistance to such warmth from the Kuwaiti parliament which continues to reiterate its position against normalisation with countries which "supported" Iraq.

The lingering side effects of the Gulf War include the fact that Jordanians remain jailed in Kuwaiti prisons, the two countries have not reappointed ambassadors and the fact that the Iraqi sports team, which was officially invited by the Arab League to participate in the Pan-Arab Games, found itself stuck at the Lebanese borders and was not allowed entry into Lebanon on the basis that Kuwait had poured a lot of dollars into the building of the sports stadium.

It is quite understandable to see the Kuwaitis remaining at a standstill vis-a-vis the government of Iraq, but to insist that the Iraqi people should continue to suffer hunger and lack of medicine under sanctions and to exclude them from sports and other non-political Arab events is an action directed at an integral part of the Arab Nation that has already paid the dear price of politics with their lives and livelihoods.

Winning the football game against the strong Kuwaiti team which was expected to get the gold medal, was an opportunity for the Jordanian people to let off some steam that has been building up since it was about time for Kuwait to get over the past and start working on the future of the Arab World, at a time when we are in desperate need for unity amongst all Arabs.

When the Jordanian people took to the streets in celebration, but showed no hostility against Kuwait, it was also a message to Kuwait that Jordan is a major player amongst Arabs and that its arm remains stretched for a "once and for all" handshake.

The fact that Sheikh Ahmad Al Fahed did stretch his arm and shook the hands of our winning team in Beirut, gives us hope that there remains a chance at a finale to the long saga, and that as soon as possible.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily Saturday focused attention on the sale of petrol and other oil products smuggled into Jordan at much lower rates than the official price, and said that petrol is being smuggled into the Kingdom from neighbouring Iraq and Saudi Arabia. Fakhri Kawar reported a personal experience on his way to Syria when the driver of his car stopped to fill his car tanks with smuggled petrol from a stationary oil tanker truck parked on the side of the road. He had learnt from the driver that the smuggled petrol is being sold for one dinar less than the official price for every 20 litre at the Jordanian gas stations. According to the writer, petrol and other oil products are being smuggled by drivers from Iraq and Saudi Arabia and sold openly in Jordan, inflicting heavy losses on the Jordanian economy. He noted that the director of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company and the president of the Jordanian Union of Gas Stations Owners have repeatedly brought this matter to the attention of the Ministry of Interior and other concerned authorities, but the smuggling has not stopped and illicit trade is flourishing. He said there definitely are certain influential people in Jordan who benefit from the smuggling operations and whose sole objective is to make quick profits, no matter how bad the economy is damaged.

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm criticised Arab Gulf countries which succumb to America's desires and wishes and accept humiliating transactions for the purchase of needless weapons and an imposed hegemony. Riham Far said the United States continues to intimidate the Gulf states by claiming that they should accept the presence of American troops and their regimes must buy American arms for the sake of security to the Arabs. Of course, America means protection not from Israel but from Iran or other Arab countries and it seeks such transactions for the sake of saving American factories from collapse and bankruptcy, said the writer. She said it is regrettable that the Arab regimes keep such matters secret and do not disclose or announce them to the masses, but it is known that they are afraid to expose their American allies' acts of blackmail. Most recently, the emir of Qatar, Hamad Ben Khalifah Al Thani, stated openly that the American weapons sold to the Arabs are obsolete and can by no means be of any benefit to the Arab people, recalled the writer who said that the Americans are not allies of the Arabs in the right sense of the world but that Washington forces the Arab regimes to buy American weapons in a bid to save their factories, threatened with bankruptcy. The writer said that the Arab regimes ought to be frank and tell their people the truth about the situation and should not succumb to intimidation from the enemies of the Arab Nation.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Economic factors — a 'strong incentive for Israel to perpetuate occupation'

ANALYSTS USUALLY look at the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza from a political, historical, legal, military or human rights perspective. Despite its importance, the economic side of occupation did not draw sufficient attention, yet it may be one of the most important factors in motivating Israel to hold on to the Palestinian territories and refuse to withdraw from the West Bank and Gaza, as stipulated in Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. This is how things were under Israeli occupation:

A) During three decades of occupation, expenditure of the Israeli administration on capital formation in the West Bank and Gaza did not exceed \$30 million as an annual average. This is much less than needed to maintain the 1967 level of infrastructure.

It is far less than the estimated depreciation of the existing infrastructure and the end result is a persistent degradation of the Palestinian infrastructure.

B) The Israeli occupation, on the other hand, was successful in converting the occupied territories into a source of cash. Instead of being a financial burden, the occupation was extremely profitable in many ways:

1. The budget of the occupation administration was kept secret for a long time. When it was finally revealed to the World Bank, it was found to be in the order of \$250 million a year. Taxes collected from the West Bank and

Gaza are estimated to have reached up to \$850 million a year, thus leaving a net surplus of \$600 million a year as a source of revenue to the Israeli treasury.

2. The Israeli trade balance used to enjoy a surplus of over one billion dollar a year because the Palestinian market was a captive market, obliged to import over 90 per cent of its needs from Israel. The remaining 10 per cent represents commodities received directly from international donors and non-governmental organisations.

3. Israel used to attract some 120,000 cheap Palestinian labourers to undertake hard work, especially in agriculture and construction sectors. Any alternative arrangement would have cost the Israeli economy an extra \$1 billion a year.

4. Israel imposed a customs union on the Palestinian economy despite the imbalance between the two economies and the obvious inferiority of the Palestinian economy. Instead of compensating the weak party, Israel took some measures to protect Israeli producers, especially the farmers, from Palestinian competition, while the Palestinian producers were fully exposed.

Even if Israel has no territorial ambitions in the West Bank and Gaza, which is not the case, the economic factors provide a strong incentive to perpetuate occupation. After all, these areas are the duck that lays golden eggs.

Israel's survival is 'linked to the development of mutual security and economic interests'

By Gershon Baskin

The writer is Israeli director of the Israel/Palestine Centre for Research and Information. The article below is reprinted from The Jerusalem Post.

PALESTINIAN FRIENDS

asked me why on earth Israel should be afraid of a small, weak and poor Palestinian state. As an advocate of a Palestinian state since 1976, I took on the challenge of answering.

A sovereign state, I told my friends, may have a full offensive fighting force. Palestinian artillery forces could thus easily attack any part of Israel. A state could establish a military industrial complex producing military hardware.

A Palestinian state would control immigration and entry of goods. Millions of Palestinians could cross its borders, and return into Israel proper. A state would enter into defence pacts with third parties not at peace with Israel.

It would also control water resources. Uncontrolled Palestinian pumping from the mountain aquifer could threaten Israel water rights and reserves.

These Israeli concerns, I suggested, might be quelled

if the Palestinians accepted limitations on their sovereignty — demilitarisation, for example, guaranteed by the deployment of international forces or Israeli observation and inspection at regular intervals. The Palestinians would enable inspection and correction without right of appeal.

They would also have to give up control over their airspace; the state would not have an air force. There would be intensive security cooperation, and the Palestinian police would have to do better at uprooting the infrastructure of terrorism potential.

The state would, I said, have to agree to port and border supervision, to observation by third parties acceptable to Israel or a non-visible Israeli presence at ports and borders, like closed circuit TV monitored by Israeli personnel. Provision by Israel of lists of persons non grata would need to be honoured by the Palestinian port authorities.

The Palestinians would, moreover, undertake not to enter into defensive pacts with countries still at war with Israel. Regarding water, they would need to accept monitoring and supervision. They would agree to joint environmental

protection and the development of new water sources.

When I paused for breath, one Palestinian friend commented dryly, "If these are Israel's conditions, I would rather continue under occupation. At least then I would be holding onto the dream of freedom, continuing to know who is my enemy."

Another friend said, "With such a start, it is very hard to envision peace. The Palestinian state will be able to live in peace only if it can offer its people full rights. A sovereign state has a better chance of entering into long-term agreements with Israel guaranteeing its stability." Peace with Jordan, it was pointed out, was not restricted by its being a sovereign state.

Another Palestinian colleague said that a subordinate Palestinian entity would not prevent other states from fighting Israel. "Under such conditions, Palestinians will never stand by Israel. Only with a full independent state will the prospects of peace in the whole region improve."

After reading a paper I wrote on the consequences of a Palestinian state for Israel a PNA official commented: "I believe the problem is in the minds of our Israeli counterparts. It is not

clear what they want from this peace process.... We want a solution where both of us benefit. You Israelis must in your minds believe that this is a process that will support you in the future more than what you give us."

Added a Palestinian activist: "The price we are willing to pay for peace is accepting Israel as a state and cooperating with it. This is not a simple concession. Once we get our rights we can say let's cooperate to make peace."

My conclusion: Palestinians suffer from the problem Jews suffered prior to the establishment of Israel — a need for identity. They will not agree to live in an Israeli-controlled state. Like every people, they need their independence.

The solution for guaranteeing Israel's survival in the face of a Palestinian state is not blocking its independence but linking it to the development of peaceful relations, embroiled with mutual security and economic interests.

The payoff of Israeli generosity to the Palestinians is the prospect of real peace locally and throughout the region.

LETTERS

Unwarranted behaviour

To the Editor:

I AM a foreigner who has been living in Jordan for nearly four years, and every summer I try to attend the Jerash Festival at least once, as I find it one of the best annual cultural events in the country. Additionally, I try to encourage my friends, Jordanian and foreign alike, to attend.

Friday evening, I was particularly pleased to see not only throngs of Jordanians but foreigners as well (I counted six or seven tourist buses in one parking lot), and I spent an entertaining three hours on the Artemis Steps watching a troupe perform Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream".

However, whatever pleasure had been derived from those few hours quickly diminished during the walk back to the car. During those five minutes I lost count of the number of times (at least five) I was touched and grabbed in places too private to mention. And I would refute any argument that would attribute these incidents to the fact that I was walking on a crowded sidewalk and that, maybe, I have mistaken a casual brush for an obscene gesture. To those who would argue that maybe such unwelcome gestures were "provoked" by my dress, I would like to add that I wore an ankle-length skirt and a long-sleeved shirt.

I would have liked to complain to any one of the police patrolling the premises, but on a dark and crowded sidewalk, wandering hands are hard to identify accurately.

Unfortunately, this happens regularly, not only at the Jerash Festival, but in the streets of Amman and elsewhere, and I have come to realise that few women (Jordanian and foreign alike) — regardless of their nationality, of their dress or of who may be in their company — are spared such indignities.

While I would stop far short of saying that I, and other women living here, have become "used to" such incidents, I no longer get surprised by them.

However, I wonder how many foreign guests, here only for a few days, may have experienced such unpleasantness, particularly at the country's prime cultural event where one expects to find the very best face of Jordan, and what impression they will take from these unpleasant and unwelcome assaults.

I salute the efforts of all those involved in making the Jerash Festival a more spectacular event each year, and I hope that the same enthusiasm to return in

dampened and I would think twice before encouraging my female friends to attend.

I would like to offer a suggestion as to how this phenomenon can be remedied, but unfortunately I have none, save for staying forever in my flat.

Amy Henderson,
Amman.

Economy is doing well

To the Editor:

DR. AHMAD Majdoub's article: "The Pernicious Habit of Complaining" (Jordan Times, July 10, 1997) clearly shows how damaging pessimism and complaining are to our economy.

In the U.S., an index was devised to measure the mood of businesspeople regarding their economy. This index proved to be one of the most compelling ways to gauge the health of the American economy. If Jordan were to do the same, the future of Jordan's economy would, most likely, look overwhelmingly bleak.

I believe it is only fair to say that the Jordanian economy has been doing much better than people expect or even believe. This indicates that the smaller percentage of citizens who are optimistic has been pushing extremely hard to not only offset the pessimists' effect but also to score positive on economic growth — real growth of about six per cent for 1996.

Even foreigners are more optimistic than the locals: the recent buying in the stock market and the increased interest in Jordanian-based projects are telling.

Last year witnessed the highest number of tourists visiting the country who brought in with them more than \$800 million. Jordanian expatriates remitted over \$1.5 billion last year. Freeing the currency exchange market, recently introduced among other very positive government policy changes, is another sign of Jordan's economic strength. Notwithstanding the need for major structural adjustments, Jordan's macro-economic indicators are indeed positive and can make one optimistic.

If I were to present my reservations, though, I only have two: the first is the huge population growth in the Kingdom (3.1 per cent annually, i.e. doubling

Defactonomics

Jordanian exports to Palestine — great potential to expand

Dr. Tayseer Abdel Jaber

IN ACCORDANCE with the economic adjustment programme, Jordan has adopted the policy of export-led growth which requires better access to foreign markets. The Palestinian market presents a good outlet, given the special economic and demographic factors that bring Jordan and Palestine together. Hence, Jordan was keen to conclude as early as January 1995 trade and other agreements which would facilitate the flow of goods between the two parties.

This policy also serves the Palestinian objective of trying to diversify economic relations after thirty years of Israeli occupation and economic domination. More than 90 per cent of the Palestinian trade is captured by Israel.

In line with the peace process, the Palestinian National Authority concluded trade agreements with many countries, including the European Union (EU) and the U.S., which would allow direct importation of Palestinian exports. However, the actual trade figures between Jordan and Palestine are quite limited.

According to the Department of Statistics, Jordanian exports to and imports from Palestine amounted in 1995 to JD 1.6 and JD 10.4 million, respectively. These figures increased in 1996 to JD 7 and JD 25 million respectively, given that imports include transit trade in other neighbouring countries.

Jordanian exports to Palestine remain less than one per cent of the total exports. However, this does not take into consideration the much larger flow of goods which individuals carry

with them as gifts when they cross the bridges from Jordan to the West Bank. This "bag trade" was estimated at \$200 million in 1996, or 20 times the official figures of Jordanian exports to Palestine. Such exports, a total of 300 types of items, include television sets, video sets, ovens, carpets and plastic products.

I believe that this kind of trade should be encouraged by both Jordan and Palestine. It represents an informal channel of economic cooperation from which both sides benefit. On the other hand, it indicates the great potential for exporting Jordanian products to Palestine which would become a major market for Jordan. It is also a way for individuals to try avoid the severe Israeli restrictions on Jordanian exports to Palestine.

In spite of promises made by high Israeli officials to Jordan, Israel maintains severe restrictions on Jordanian exports to Palestine. These include: limiting the number of trucks crossing the bridges, time delays due to health and security checks by Israeli authorities, high fees on loading and unloading. In addition, the lists of goods which were incorporated in the Paris Protocol on Economic Relations between the PLO and Israel were not revised since April 1994. They were supposed to be reviewed every six months to allow for the introduction of new imports from Jordan and an increase in their quantities.

Jordanian exports could grow to much higher levels if Israel implemented in good faith its economic agreements with Jordan and Palestine. This issue should be taken up again in order to allow for stronger regional cooperation.

Sports is not politics

To the Editor:

I AM an Iraqi national currently playing for the Jordanian squash team. Unfortunately, I could not participate in the Pan-Arab Games because of my Iraqi passport.

Like everybody else, I was shocked when Iraq was banned from the games to satisfy some selfish Arab sentiments.

I was born in Cairo, studied in Lebanon, lived the civil war there and I suffered, not only as a fellow Arab, but as a human being.

Iraq was destroyed as a country and its people are isolated from the rest of the world. But why cannot politics be separated from sports? The Iraqi Olympic team, no matter who runs it, is an institution of a member state of the Arab League and at that level, at least, there should not have been disputes for the world to gloat over.

Life is never fair, but we should be able to understand and live by the meaning of the phrase we so often use: "We are all one."

We could start by letting Iraq back in the Arab fold.

Rima Chadirchi,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

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24 years on, survivor of Libyan plane downed by Israeli jets still awaits justice and compensation

By Francesca Ciriaci
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — An old photograph hanging on the wall of his simple and decorous sitting room is about all Abdullah Khalili - Abu Nabil - has to remind him of who he was before that terrible day in February 1973 when the Israeli Air Force shot down the Libyan Airlines plane in which he was flying.

Crippled, his right hand and left ear mutilated, burn scars covering 50 per cent of his body, it is hard to recognise Abu Nabil as the young, well-dressed, distinguished, blue-eyed man in the photo.

Together with three other fellow passengers on that fateful flight - a Palestinian with Libyan nationality, an Egyptian and a Libyan - Abu Nabil survived one of the deadliest crimes in the history of civil aviation.

Claiming 108 innocent lives, two Israeli Phantom jet fighters shot down the Libyan aircraft that had overshoot Cairo airport and entered the airspace above the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula.

ing conscience, not even for one minute," Mr. Khalili, who is originally from Hebron, recalls.

"I was looking at my arm, my hands and my whole body while they were on fire. I could see, I could think and I could speak, but I could not move one single muscle, not even to try putting out the fire engulfing me."

"An Israeli military helicopter arrived at the scene immediately, almost at the same time the plane crashed on the ground ... and not even five minutes passed before Israeli soldiers brought me and the other three survivors on board that rescue helicopter," he says.

During those few minutes that seemed an eternity, "I was shouting and screaming for help" Abu Nabil recalls.

Since that day 24 years ago, Mr. Khalili has never received any official compensation from either the Libyan Airlines or the Israeli government, while his repeated requests for financial assistance from the Ministry of Interior, the social security and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have gone unheeded.

Except for a \$10,000 "gift" received from the hands of Moshe Dayan, at that time minister of defence in the government of the then Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, and the payment of his hospital fees at Ber Sheba, "I received no compensation, official or otherwise, from Libya or Israel," Mr. Khalili maintains.

Before the "accident" Abu Nabil and his family were leading a dignified and comfortable life, with the aid of the JD 1,200 that he used to send home every month from Libya where he was working as a mechanic

for Caterpillar and MG engines.

To pay the expensive hospital bills, medical treatments and medicine, as well as to feed their twelve children, Abu Nabil and his wife sold all they had.

"The house in Amman, the car, my jewellery, everything is gone," Mrs. Khalili whispers sadly to the two reporters visiting their Ruseifa home, just outside Amman.

After the "accident," Mrs. Khalili sought help from everywhere she could think of. One charity organisation finally answered her petitions and gave her JD 20.

"You have sons, everybody was telling me," she says. But only two of her

five sons are currently working "and they have to take care of their own families," she says.

Too busy to survive from one day to another, Abu Nabil has never had the time to sit down and add all his hospital bills, but he estimates that they must have totalled "not less than 50,000 dinars."

"In addition, one should take into consideration all the money I lost as a result of losing my job in Libya," he says.

The only actual financial assistance that Mr. Khalili ever received came a few days after the incident, while he was hospitalised in Israel.

To Golda Meir and

Moshe Dayan, who visited him in the Ber Sheba hospital shortly after the downing, Abu Nabil said: "I am ruined."

"Hamdullah assalameh," he recalls Mr. Dayan telling him.

"How am I going to make a living, now?" Abu Nabil recoils to have answered.

"Mr. Dayan left the room, came back after 20 minutes, and handed me \$10,000, saying: 'With this you can start any business in Amman'."

But that turned out to be a far too optimistic statement, and, shortly afterwards, Abu Nabil, his wife and his children were penniless.

As soon as he could, Abu Nabil started driving a taxi, waiting for his sons to grow up and help him. He clung on to that job until skin ulcers started to spread on his feet and legs because of bad blood circulation and diabetes, both consequences of the "accident," forcing him from stop work.

His attempts to seek compensation through Jordanian lawyers were in vain.

"The lawyers told me that they could do nothing and that I needed an Israeli lawyer to seek compensation from the Israeli government or a Libyan lawyer to seek compensation from the Libyan Airlines," he says.

Before the signing of the 1994 Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, his chances to approach an Israeli court were indeed slim.

"I also went to the Libyan embassy in Amman and filed many petitions, but I never received any response," Mr. Khalili complains.



Abdullah Khalili

One lawyer wrote repeatedly on Abu Nabil's behalf to the Jordanian embassy in Tripoli, asking for "compensation for physical, psychological, moral and financial damages" and urging the Jordanian consul there to "contact the

concerned authorities in the Libyan Republic."

But those letters received only a few notes of acknowledgement.

Today, Mr. Khalili is still waiting for "justice to be served," and although he cannot afford a lawyer, he hopes that, after the peace

treaty with Israel, some Israeli lawyer will be willing to accept his case.

"Airlines refund passengers when they lose their luggage," Abu Nabil says.

"I lost my body. Am I not entitled to get any compensation for that?"

Internet growth turns governments wary

By Christina Toh-Pantlin
Reuters

KUALA LUMPUR — It has taken root in 171 countries, counts perhaps 40 million users worldwide and could connect all nations by 2000.

Nearly three decades after the Internet was first used as a communications network, governments are struggling with a dilemma — how do you bottle up cyberspace?

In its birthplace, the United States, the supreme court in late June struck down a law restricting indecent speech online as impinging upon free speech.

Backers of the 1996 Communications Decency Act had been concerned that children would be exposed to inappropriate, pornographic material that is widely available on the Internet.

Many Internet users, however, feared the broadly-worded restrictions would have chilled free expression across the global computer network.

Concern travels beyond borders

Those worries, like cyberspace communications, cross borders.

At the June annual convention of the Internet's main user group, the Internet Society, a panel speaker said that after scanning about 300,000 e-mails, discussions about censorship and control by government "is about the hottest topic we've seen on the Internet."

Most users in the United States and other Western countries have said they prefer non-interference by government on the net.

That stance extends to the U.S. government itself, at least in electronic commerce, when President Bill Clinton at mid-year called for no new taxes or regulations on business conducted in cyberspace.

Ira Magaziner, special advisor to Mr. Clinton, agreed there was an inherent difficulty in governments taking a hands-off policy toward new developments. "The natural tendency of governments (is to) feel they've got to get control of it."

Western, Asian controls differ

Within the West, Internet regulation ranges from the implementation of a code of ethics in France to extension of existing media laws to cover restrictions on the net in Germany.

Concerns about government control of the Internet have been most apparent in Asia, where China initially required Internet users to register with the police and blocked about 100 web sites including those belonging to U.S. media organisations.

Singapore censors the net to ferret out pornography and other items it considers objectionable.

Peng Hwa Ang, of Singapore Nanyang Technological University, said South Korea's minister of communications can order an information provider to delete and restrict material offered on their services. Vietnam, which is hoping to license its first provider soon, requires Internet users to get a permit.

But, he said his studies show that governments have been softening their stances toward cyberspace, and gradually loosening

their restrictions. "In every case I've seen, there's been a retrenchment (from a previous position)," he told a panel discussion at the Internet society's conference in June.

Indeed, even in countries like Malaysia, where press controls are applied, Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has pledged that the Internet will not be censored as part of the bill of rights offered to the proposed multimedia super corridor (MSC) project.

The high-technology, high-speed communications tested for multimedia applications depends on the expertise and willingness of foreign companies.

Asia changing stance

"I think Asia is learning very fast and is willing to change its stance in order to bring good," Tengku Azzman Shariffadeen, chief executive officer of Mimos BHD, an Internet service provider in Malaysia, told Reuters in an interview.

But, he added, "you cannot ask them (Asian countries) to change overnight."

The barring of deviant influences and the promotion of local cultures is at the heart of some of Asia's efforts to police the net. But even those goals can be difficult to reach.

"When it comes to Asian values, (it's) very difficult to explain it," said Izumi Aizu, of Japan. "It's a very rough consensus."

Discussions of to-censor or not-to-censor the net have also been moving from the philosophical and social to the pragmatic and practical.

Countries that persist in controlling the Internet

could lose out economically, some Internet users warn.

"If we try to control access at the government level... Countries will not have full participation (in economic development)," said Larry Landweber of the United States, also known as the "father of the purple map," which traces the spread of the Internet by colouring each connected country purple.

As of June 1997, 171 countries were connected, with 195 countries out of a world total of 207 able to send or receive e-mail, he said.

"I think we're within a year or two of having every country connected to the Internet," Mr. Landweber told the Internet society's conference in Kuala Lumpur in June.

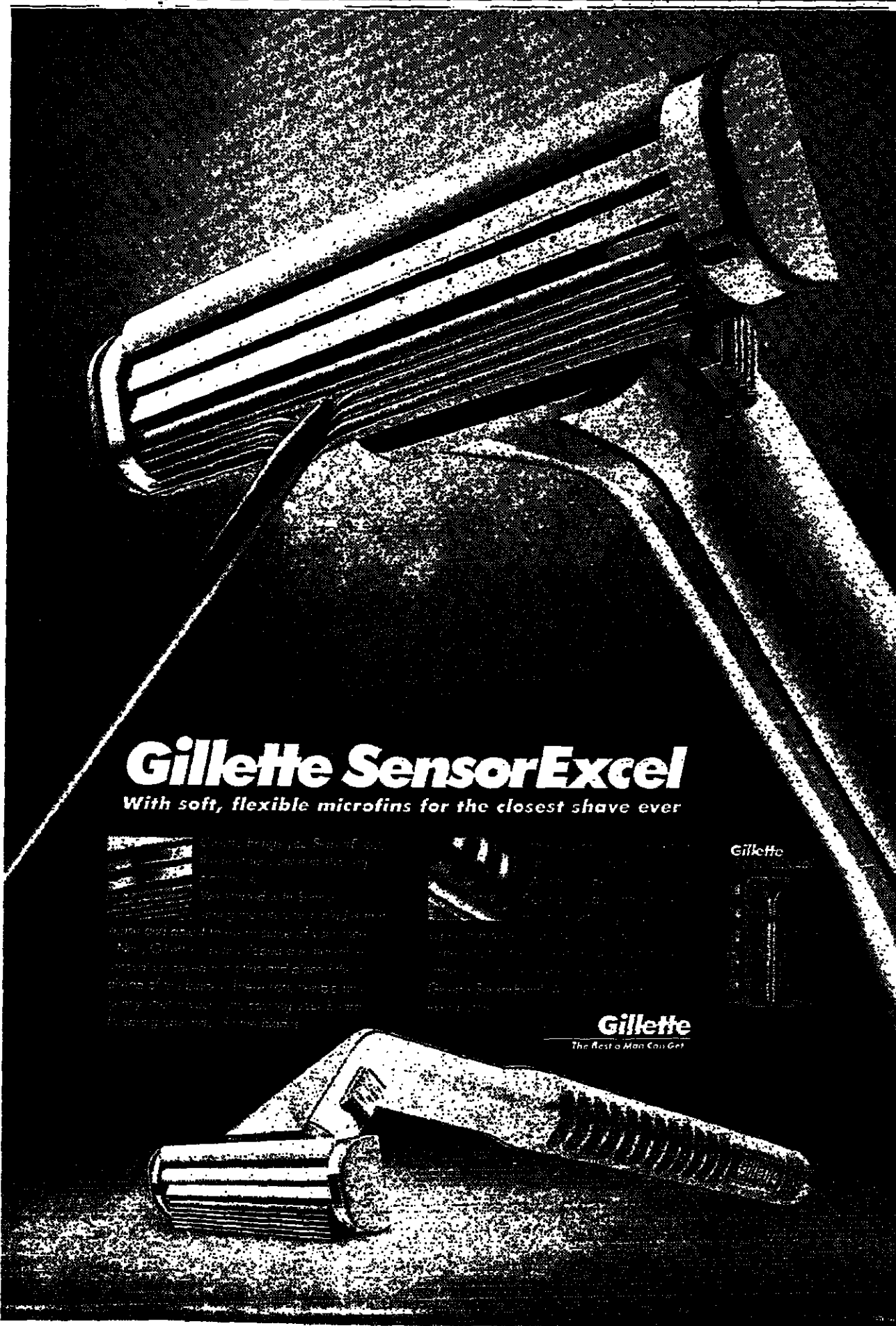
The United States is trying to get other countries to embrace an initiative for an Internet trade framework.

"For countries that are poor and stay away from it, it could widen the gap," Mr. Magaziner warned during a trip to Singapore in June to publicise the framework.

Developing nations may intertwine roles

For developing countries, the role of government and cyberspace may continue to be intertwined, some observers say.

"If not for the government, there would be no MSC," argues Derrick Khoo, chief executive officer of Malaysian high-technology firm Brave Bold SDN BHD. "This is very topdown. I think in many countries, the government may have to get involved."



UAE expects number of jobless to reach 200,000 in 10 years

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) will have an estimated 200,000 jobless nationals in 10 years and the private sector must hire more home-grown labour, a UAE minister said in press comments Saturday.

Communication Minister Ahmad Al Tayar said a government job nationalisation drive in the banking sector could be enforced in other sectors to absorb the growing number of graduates from universities and other institutions.

"Employment of UAE nationals will be among the most serious challenges facing the coup-

try," Mr. Tayar told Al Itihad newspaper.

"Estimates show that there will be nearly 200,000 citizens in the year 2006 searching for jobs. There should be a plan to ensure jobs for them in the private sector and I think the national and foreign institutions should shoulder their responsibility in this respect," he stressed.

The UAE has launched a campaign to provide jobs for its growing number of qualified citizens and ease reliance on dominant foreign labour.

But the private sector has been reluctant to recruit nationals on the

grounds they lack skills and demand much higher salaries.

According to independent estimates, UAE nationals account for less than 10 per cent of the Gulf country's workforce of around one million. Most of the expatriate workers are from India, Pakistan, and other Asian countries.

In banking, UAE natives form only 8.8 per cent of the nearly 13,000 employees, said Mr. Tayar, who heads a government committee overseeing a job nationalisation programme in the UAE's 47 banks.

"I think the efforts being exerted in the

banking sector to develop national manpower will spread to other sectors, including industry, trade, insurance and other services," Mr. Tayar said.

The Labour and Social Affairs Ministry said last week it had drafted laws to force the private sector to employ nationals, who account for less than one third of the total population of around 2.4 million.

Foreigners have been attracted by the UAE's vast oil wealth, which has brought it one of the world's highest per capita income of around \$16,500 a year in 1996.

'The economy is not an end in itself — it is a matter of improving quality of life'

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Former Indian Finance Minister Manmohan Singh, the architect of the country's sweeping free-market reforms, has said the next three or four years were crucial for the country's economy.

He said a new wave of reforms had to be brought in to continue the wave of liberalisation set in motion in 1991.

"It is matter of momentum," he told AFP. "The next three to four years are crucial."

"We have crippling shortages of power, port capacity and road capacity. We have to make up for the lost time in these areas," he said.

Mr. Singh said the Indian economy, currently growing at 6.2 per cent, would "stabilise at seven per cent growth" but "warned of problems ahead."

"We have important infrastructure bottlenecks," he said.

India's gross fiscal deficit, he said, was about nine per cent of gross domestic product, or more than \$23 billion.

"Now, whether growth will stabilise at seven or eight per cent in the future will depend on what we do in the next four years to tackle the fiscal crisis, the infrastructure and the human resource development crisis," he indicated.

He argued that "small

growth does not trickle down" and said India had to target high growth if it wanted to tackle poverty in the country.

"The economy is not an end in itself — it is a matter of improving quality of life," he explained.

Mr. Singh stressed New Delhi had to offer overseas investors in India's infrastructure the chance of profitable investments.

Experts believe the country's roads, ports and power stations need a cash injection of \$200 billion over the next five years.

"We as a nation should tackle these issues before we can say the growth will rise to eight per cent," Mr. Singh added.

"We need major policy changes in the power sector, we need to reform tariffs and management systems. They are crucial before more investments can come in," he emphasised.

"If these things are in place, hereafter, there is greater assurance that investment will more or less flow in. So that is why the next four years are crucial," he said.

As finance minister six years ago, Mr. Singh reversed more than 40 years of centralised socialist policies initially put in place by the country's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru.

The economic reforms

were launched following a foreign exchange crisis. They have since been adopted and continued by the current government. Meanwhile, a top industry body said recently that India needs to increase its investments in agriculture to achieve its target of eight per cent growth.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said the agricultural sector had been neglected following the country's free-market reforms.

"The impact of the reform process on the agriculture sector has been limited to the reduction of subsidies provided to this sector and cosmetic changes surrounding its trade," it said.

The CII, in a report entitled "Can India raise its growth rate to eight per cent of gross domestic product?" said "more concrete steps are needed to infuse some kind of dynamism into the sector."

It argued that would "be one of the steps to redress the stagnation in the agriculture sector. The declining trend of public investments in this sector needs to be reversed."

Public investment in agriculture was \$513 million in 1980-81 but dropped to \$374 million in 1995-96.

The CII report also warned India's external debt burden of \$90 bil-

lion would have a destabilising effect on the economy.

The central bank says the government's annual debt repayments during the next 10 years would be above \$3 billion.

The CII also outlined other areas of economic concern, such as the stock markets and infrastructure.

It said: "The situation in the Indian economy today can be described as one of having growth but no investment. There has been negligible capital formation since 1991. This makes the future prospects bleak."

"A permanent inertia seems to have captured the primary and the secondary markets. The market is simply not picking up, which has led to the industry not getting the necessary financial support from the stock markets," the CII added.

The report said private investment in infrastructure was lacking.

"Ambiguities surrounding government policies ... and long gestation lags have become major impediments in the way of private sector participation," the report pointed out.

More than \$20 billion are required, according to analysts, to improve India's roads, ports, telecommunications and railways.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	SEK	NOK	FRF
US Dollar	1.3885	0.8019	1.5160	116.85	1.3840	1707.00	2.0710	6.1960	
DE Mark	0.5439	1.0000	0.3272	0.8245	63.56	0.7526	971.72	1.1265	3.3700
GB Sterling	1.6615	2.0585	1.0000	2.5168	194.38	2.2995	2969.10	3.4410	10.2947
CH Franc	0.6596	1.2123	0.3968	1.0000	77.07	0.9126	1178.37	136.84	4.0857
JP Yen	0.0088	1.5720	0.5145	1.2863	1.0000	1.1834	15.26	177.08	5.2880
CA Dollar	0.7225	1.3281	0.4335	1.0934	1.18	1.0000	1290.50	1.4937	4.4710
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0282	0.3366	0.8848	1531.39	0.7740	11.58	3.4653	
NL Guilder	0.4829	0.8873	0.2904	0.7318	56.38	0.6680	862.45	2.9903	
FR Franc	0.1614	0.2966	0.0971	0.24595	18.84	0.2233	33.41	33.4100	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BHD	QAT	KUW	YEM	IRN	EGP
US Dollar	1.4104	0.7090	3.7504	0.3770	3.6395	0.3038	3.6726	1539.00	3.3930
Jordan Dinar	0.2666	1.0000	5.2897	0.5317	5.1333	0.4286	5.1800	2170.68	4.7456
Saudi Riyal	2.65	1.8806	1.0000	0.1005	0.97	0.0810	0.98	410.36	0.9047
Bahrain Dinar	0.2748	0.1948	1.0305	1.0000	1.0305	1.01	0.0835	4.02	0.9223
Qatar Dinar	3.2906	2.3330	12.3409	1.2405	11.96	12.08	5064.17	0.9323	
Kuwait Dinar	0.2723	0.1931	1.0212	1.0107	0.9910	0.0827	419.05	0.9239	
Emirates Dinar	0.65	0.4607	2.4369	0.2450	2.3648	0.1976	2.3884	2.2047	
Lebanese L1000	0.2947	0.2090	1.1053	0.1111	1.0726	0.0896	1.0824	453.58	
Egyptian									

Energy									
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Brent	19.22	19.11							
WTI	19.68	19.58							
Bonny	19.22	19.11							
Dubai	17.13	17.13							
UL Gas	196.00	192.00							

Mid-East Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BHD	QAT	KUW	YEM	IRN	EGP
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4903	0.18048	0.40435	31.1837				
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.50073	0.16388	0.41292	31.8441				
BH Dinar	3.2906	6.04961	1.98059	4.99002	384.763				
KW Dinar	0.3770	4.87805	1.99642	4.02253	310.174				
CY Pound	1.8533	3.4073	1.1151	2.8096	216.558				

Metal Prices									
Metal	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Gold (oz)	325.45	325.95							
Silver (oz)	4.33	4.35							
Platinum (oz)	423.8	425.8							
AL (3 Months)	1682	1687							
CU (3 Months)	2382	2387							
Zinc (3 Months)	1625	1630							
Lead (3 Months)	653	658							
Ni (3 Months)	7200	7250							

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
Period	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	SEK	NOK	FRF
1 Month	5.53	5.52	5.71	5.81	5.90				
3 Months	6.78	6.93	7.25	7.12	7.40				
6 Months	8.58	8.65	8.68	8.43	8.78				
1 Year	10.30	10.06	10.18	10.12	10.34				
2 Year	12.23	12.28	12.38	12.46	12.54				
3 Year	14.33	14.33	14.60	14.69	14.78				
4 Year	16.78	16.80	17.15	17.24	17.32				

Main Equity Indices									
Source	Index	Value	Change	High	Low	Open	Close	Change	High
New York	DOW JONES	8113.44	-3.49	-0.04	8157.11	8080.46	8116.93		
New York	S&P 500	938.79	-1.49	-0.18	945.65	938.08	940.28		
London	FT-SE 100	4851.5	-11.4	-0.23	4881.2	4834.8	4882.9		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20389.54	103.31	0.51	20388.5	20303.7	20286.2		
Paris	CAC 40	3025.94	52.41	1.76	3030.62	2987.48	2973.53		
Frankfurt	DAX	4317.84	-18.1	-0.42	4350.49	4308.88	4335.74		

Energy									
Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Coffee (c/lbs)	193.83	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1529	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	342.5	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	142	Spot							
Soybeans (\$/ton)	21.42	Spot							
Tea (ctg/kg)	137	Spot							
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot							

JOD Cross Rates									
Currency	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	Buy
US Dollar	0.708	0.710							
GB Sterling	1.754	1.761							
DE Mark	0.3849	0.3868							
CH Franc	0.4685	0.4688							
FR Franc	0.1142	0.1148							
JP Yen	0.6043	0.6073							
NL Guilder	0.3417	0.3434							
IT Lira	0.3955	0.3975							

Source: Central Bank of Jordan									
Source:	Central Bank of Jordan								



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, JULY 27, 1997

By Thomas S. Pieroni, Astrologer, Carroll Richter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) If you are in the mood to go out on the town today, or just to visit some friends or relatives, you should not try to force anyone to accompany you as this will only cause him or her to become annoyed with your actions.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Take the time today to schedule your activities whether for business or personal reasons for the days ahead, and thereby you can increase your efficiency. Avoid disagreement at all cost if it is possible.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You should avoid individuals who feel they have a right to control the course of your life. It would be better to get plenty of rest later this evening, thereby you will be prepared for a hectic few days ahead.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) It would behoove you to discuss financial or property matters with anyone today, since any advice which you can obtain would be helpful. You should not allow an outsider to cause strife in your home.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Running away from your difficulties only guarantees that they will be bigger when you get back. Don't lose your temper with anyone today or you could say something which you could regret in the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You may find it difficult to express your feelings today, however don't try to blame this difficult situation on anyone. Get some tasks completed around the house which you have put off and gain the praise of your loved ones.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You may be itching to go off for a little adventure with close friends today, however it would be better to stay at home and get to know your loved ones again. Later this evening will be good for relaxing at home with your loved ones.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You should not disagree with anyone about finances today unless you are absolutely sure of your facts and figures. Drive very carefully while you are on the highway later this evening and thereby avoid any difficult situations.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Arrange a schedule for your career activities this week which you can stick to easily and not have to constantly revise. You should not allow a temperamental friend get your dander up or you could say things you could regret.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You may feel that you have more tasks to do today than you can handle, however this is only in your mind, especially if you schedule your time properly. Be honest with yourself and others towards achieving your goals.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Stop worrying about an annoying situation today which can do little to change. Try to soothe a fellow associate who has gotten himself or herself in a lather, thereby you can eliminate a difficult situation from occurring.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You should not complain about conditions today which can't be changed, learn to adapt, instead, be prepared for some strange surprise to occur in the days ahead which could be pleasant or difficult to deal with.

Birthstone of July: Pearl — Ruby — Tiger's Eye

BETTER HALF

By GL

Work we watch TV every: My boss thinks my computer an Oprah screen save

AMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLI

How to PRAC

Jordan adds silver, bronze medals in karate

Equestrian, swimming teams again unimpressive

By Aileen Bannayan
and JSYIF
press committee

JORDAN'S KARATE team Saturday added 2 more medals a day before the 8th Pan-Arab Games draws to its end Sunday.

Nael Oweimer took a silver medal in the 80-kilogramme category while teammate Amr Masoud took the bronze in the over-80-kilogramme weight.

Meanwhile, the equestrian team failed in the Grand Prix event with veteran Hani Bisharat eliminated in the second round, Ra'ed Naser coming in 9th and Sinan Nashashibi finishing 19th.

Saudi Arabia's Ramzi Dahami won gold, Egypt's Adham Hammad silver and Lebanon's Karim Faris bronze.

In the equestrian team event earlier in the competition, Jordan had finished at a disappointing 7th place among 8 competing teams.

In swimming also, Jordan's young team was again far from competitive records and did not yield any positive results, with Rania Goshel finishing 9th in the 100-metre freestyle, Yuzan Khouri 12th in the 1500-metre freestyle although he set a new Jordanian record.

In the 400-metre medley, Hana Majaj, who won the sole swimming medal for Jordan earlier in the competition, finished 5th.

Saturday's two karate medals brought Jordan's medals tally up to 38, with 7 gold, 10 silver and 21 bronze.

With only the soccer final left for Sunday — the closing day for the two-week-long event which brought together 3,000 athletes — Jordan's results and medals so far have been the best in the history of past Arab

Games participations.

The Kingdom's taekwondo team was one of the most impressive earning a total of 13 medals and making it the most successful Jordanian participation in the Pan-Arab Games to date.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan congratulated the taekwondo delegation on their admirable achievement.

In the women's event, Zaha Talbouni and Alisar Matar took golds for Jordan as Nancy Hindi took silver and Fatima Sayyad and Ahlam Bino bronze.

In the men's competition, Hussein Tahleh took gold, Raed Naji, Ali Asmar and Mohammad Abul Ruz silver and Shadi Abu Taleb, Daoud Matar, Ibrahim Agel and Mohammad Nawwaf bronze.

The women's karate team of Nawal Bayyari, Azahir Zuhdi and Butheina Mahsiri won three bronze medals.

The boxing and athletics teams also secured 10 medals altogether.

The boxers won two gold medals by Mohammad Abu Khadijeh and Ayman Al Nadi and three bronze by Kamal Abdul Majid, Khalidoun Abdul Hameed and Basel Hindawi. In athletics, Nada Kassar won a gold in the discus and a silver medal in the shot put; Fakhreddin Fuad added another gold in the high jump; Ala' Abdul Hadi won a bronze in the triple jump and Amal Matar took another bronze in the women's marathon.

Ayed Khawaldeh became the first Jordanian to win three bronze weightlifting medals; Amer Natour took silver and bronze medals in fencing and Mousa Khalaf took a silver for Jordan in judo.

Abdul Hakim Abu

Medals table (excluding Saturday's results)

Nation	Gold	Silver	Bronze
Egypt	94	51	37
Algeria	38	42	42
Morocco	19	14	14
Syria	14	26	35
Qatar	9	6	2
Tunisia	8	12	25
Jordan	7	9	20
Lebanon	6	16	47
Saudi Arabia	5	10	19
Kuwait	1	12	17
Oman	1	1	1
Sudan	0	1	2
Libya	0	1	1
Yemen	0	0	0
Palestine	0	0	4
Bahrain	0	0	1



Sneineh took the silver medal in the 69-kilogramme Greco-Roman wrestling and Ismail Issa Al Sheikh added a silver in freestyle wrestling.

In table tennis Iyad Maknay and Abdul Aziz Rida took the bronze in doubles and added another bronze in the team event.

In women's basketball, Jordan finished fourth after losing to Lebanon while the men came in 6th after losing 56-53 to Kuwait.

In shooting, Khaled Naghaway was eliminated from the top six qualifying positions so were the rest of the Kingdom's swimmers. Hana Majaj took the only swimming bronze medal making up for otherwise disappointing results by her teammates.

The 8th Pan-Arab Games which conclude tonight have been the largest gathering of Arab youth since the event was last held in Syria in 1992.

With Iraqi athletes barred from competition because of a boycott threat by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, 19 countries are taking part in the Beirut Games with only Somalia and the Comoros missing the event.

Twenty events are being contested at the Games excluding kick-boxing, handball, gymnastics, body-building, hockey, diving and water polo for technical and financial reasons.

The Kingdom's 187-strong delegation which includes 94 men and 33 women athletes competed in 14 of the 20 events. The delegation also includes 27 officials, 20 coaches and 13 referees.

Jordan dropped participation in cycling, tennis and volleyball, and will be competing in athletics, basketball, karate, swimming, taekwondo, table tennis, boxing, equestrian, fencing, soccer, weightlifting, judo, freestyle and Greco-Roman wrestling and shooting. Other events at the Games include golf and yachting.

In line with international rules, drug testing was introduced for the first time since the Arab Games were launched in 1953. All gold medalists are being tested for performance-enhancing drugs, in addition to one other competitor selected in a draw in each event. Lebanon is hosting the Arab World's premier sports

event for the first time since the second Arab Games in 1957.

Jordan has received approval to host the 9th Pan-Arab Games in 2001. Kuwait was chosen as a substitute in case Jordan withdrew their bid.

Jordanian sports officials have underlined their support for organising and taking part in the Pan-Arab Games which have only been held seven times since 1953.

But the Games, designed to emphasise Arab brotherhood, were clouded by Lebanon's refusal to grant the Iraqi team entry visas for fear of provoking Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Jordan has taken part in all past seven Pan-Arab Games gaining a total of 49 medals (7 gold, 16 silver, 26 bronze).

Jordan finished 9th overall in the last Pan-Arab Games in 1992 with 1 gold, 6 silver and 6 bronze medals.

The Pan-Arab Games were held in Alexandria 1953, Beirut 1957, Casablanca 1961, Cairo 1965, Damascus 1976, Rabat 1985 and Damascus 1992.



Dalia Al Arabi (R) of Egypt jumps for the ball next to Salpi Chogarian (L) of Lebanon during the final match of the Pan-Arab Games. Egypt won the match 73-44 capturing the gold medal. Tunisia came second and Lebanon third (Reuters photo)

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Ronaldo ready for Milan

MILAN (R) — Brazil striker Ronaldo arrived in Italy on Friday and said he was looking forward to locking horns with coach Fabio Capello for a second consecutive season. Ronaldo will play for Internazionale next season while Capello will be in charge of city neighbours AC Milan. Last season, the world footballer of the year played for Barcelona while Capello guided their arch-rivals Real Madrid to the Spanish League title. "Capello is a great coach, a great tactician," Ronaldo told a news conference at Inter headquarters hours after arriving in Italy from Brazil. "Even so, it would be a great feeling to beat Capello's Milan to the Italian League title."

Bakero turned down

LONDON (R) — Former Spanish captain Jose Bakero has been turned down by Middlesbrough after a three-week trial at the English first division club. "Bakero has not been offered a contract by the Boro after a trial spell," the club said on Friday. Manager Bryan Robson had said earlier in the month that the 33-year-old former Barcelona midfielder was likely to get a permanent contract at the newly-relegated club. Bakero was released on a free transfer by Mexican club Veracruz and is seeking to return to Europe. Middlesbrough are in the process of rebuilding their squad to try and secure an immediate return to the Premier League.

Kanu back after surgery

MILAN (R) — Nwankano Kanu, the Nigerian striker who underwent heart surgery last year, will return to soccer on Sunday when his Italian club Internazionale play Manchester United in a friendly. Inter executive Sandro Mazzola said on Friday doctors had given Kanu the go-ahead to play after he passed a series of stress tests on his heart. He said Kanu was likely to play a few minutes in Sunday's friendly in Milan against the English champions. Kanu, who led Nigeria to the gold medal at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, returned to Italy earlier this month after completing a rehabilitation programme following an operation in the United States to repair a damaged heart valve. The condition was discovered shortly after the

African footballer of the year was signed by Inter from Ajax Amsterdam last year. Doctors warned at the time that the lanky striker could die if he carried on playing.

Smith fails in record bid

BELFAST (R) — Ireland's triple Olympic gold medalist Michelle Smith failed by over two seconds in a world record bid in the 200 metres butterfly at the Irish Open championships on Friday. She said she was disappointed with her performance and would decide next week whether to defend her 200 metres butterfly and 200 metres individual medley titles at the European Championships in August. Smith won in two minutes 8.15 seconds, well outside the 16-year-old world mark of 2:05.96 held by American Mary T. Meagher. "Maybe I'm not as fit as I thought, but I wouldn't have gone for that record if I didn't think I could break it," she said.

Materazzi coaches Brescia

BRESCIA (R) — Newly-promoted Italian Serie A side Brescia have named Giuseppe Materazzi to replace former head coach Eddy Reja. Materazzi is to take over immediately at the northern club after Reja, who led the side back into the top flight, stepped down on Friday citing a long-standing dispute with management. Materazzi, 51, coached Padova in the second division last year after several seasons at the helm of southern club Bari.

Argentine League strike

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Argentina's professional soccer players Friday night decided to go ahead with a planned strike this weekend. After more than four hours of talks with the Argentine Football Association (AFA) at the labour ministry, the players' union failed to reach an agreement and the meeting was adjourned until Monday, meaning weekend league matches will be suspended. "I tried my best (to avoid the strike) but I lost," idol Diego Maradona told his manager, Guillermo Coppola, as he left the labour ministry. Players last Tuesday voted to strike until troubled First Division side Deportivo Espanol agreed to allow six players whose contracts expired on June 30 to move to other sides.

Workshop on Graduate Studies in American Universities: The Application Process, Admission Requirements and Scholarships

Location: Royal Scientific Society
Date: July 30, 1997
Time: 09.00 a.m. - 01.00 p.m.

Sponsored by:

The National Centre for Human Resources Development (NCHRD),
Fulbright Programme, Amman - Jordan.
The Higher Council for Science and Technology.
Arab Scientists and Technologists Abroad.

Panelists:

- Victor Billeh, President National Centre for Human Resources Development.
- Issa Batarseh, Associate Professor, Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, University of Central Florida.
- Allan McNamara, Director Jordan-American Commission for Educational Exchange - Fulbright programme Amman-Jordan.
- Munir Nayfeh, Professor of Physics - University of Illinois.

Objectives:

- Help our students learn about the graduate admission procedures in the U.S. universities.
- Provide assistance to potential graduate students on how to present a complete and accurate application file for graduate school.
- Help students to focus on important components in the application file that effect the graduate committee decision, and
- Introduce various international scholarship programmes from the Fulbright and the World Bank.

The number is limited, attendees should contact phone No. 831451 from 08.00 a.m. to 05.00 p.m.

Jordan plays Syria tonight in Pan-Arab Games soccer final

King Hussein to receive players

JD 15,000 reward awaits team

By a Jordan Times
Staff Reporter

JORDAN'S SOCCER team plays Syria Sunday in the final of the soccer event at the Pan-Arab Games which conclude in Beirut following the match.

Winning the match will be the best ever achievement in the Kingdom's soccer history.

According to delegation sources in Beirut, HRH Prince Abdullah, president of the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF), telephoned team captain Jamal Abu Abed urging the players to do their utmost in the final.

Delegation sources said His Majesty King Hussein will receive the team following their return and a reward of JD 15,000 (JD 700 each) has been allocated for them.

JSF Vice-President Saleh Irshaidat will attend the match which caps two weeks of competition in which 3,000 athletes from 19 countries took part.

The Kingdom's team had scored a landmark 3-2 over Kuwait to qualify for the final for the first time.

Syria beat Lebanon 3-2 in the other semi-final to qualify for the final.

Jordanian who took to the streets following the match honking horns and waving the flags in celebration, now hope the team will continue its successful run and win the gold medal.

Jordan's players said they were happy at Syria reaching the final as that had relieved the extra pressure of having to play the hosts.

Jordan upset expectations by beating Kuwait — a team with an impressive record in Asia and a World Cup qualifier in 1982 — to advance to the final.

Eight countries took part in the soccer event. Group 1 included Jordan, Lebanon, Oman and Libya while Group 2 included Kuwait, the UAE, Syria and Mauritania.

Only the top two teams in each group qualified to the second round.

Jordan and Lebanon qualified from Group 1 while Syria and Kuwait qualified Group 2.

Jordan beat Oman 3-1, and drew 1-1 with Libya and Lebanon. Syria beat the UAE 3-1, Kuwait 2-1 and Mauritania 1-0. The Kingdom's best result in past soccer competitions at the Games was fourth.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "1"

Jim Carrey ... in
LIAR LIAR

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"

Macaulay Culkin &
Elijah Wood ... in
THE GOOD SON

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA

Chris O'Donnell...in
MAD LOVE

Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00

Adel Imam...in
BAKHIT AND ADEELAH (PART 2)
(Aljardal wal kanaka)
Shows: 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Kevin Costner & Rene Russo...in
TIN CUP

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:45

CONCORD "2"
Michael Jordan...in
SPACEJAM
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New York Mets second baseman Carlos Baerga (L) is upended while reaching for a low ball by San Diego Padres' Steve Finley as he steals second base in the third inning of their game in San Diego (Reuters photo)

MAJOR LEAGUE RESULTS

American League			
Detroit	1	Los Angeles	1
Minnesota	1	San Diego	1
Seattle	1	St. Louis	1
Toronto	1	White Sox	1
Texas	1	Yankees	1
Minnesota	1	Baltimore	1
National League			
Atlanta	1	Chicago	1
Houston	1	Montreal	1
Florida	1	St. Louis	1
Colorado	1	Chicago Cubs	1
Los Angeles	1	Philadelphia	1
NY Mets	1	San Diego	1
Pittsburgh	1	San Francisco	1

Raoux upsets Philipoussis; Courier downs Krajicek as Ivanisevic through

LOS ANGELES (R) — Frenchman Guillaume Raoux beat third-seeded Mark Philipoussis of Australia 7-6 (7-5) 6-4 to score the biggest upset of the \$303,000 Infiniti Open and reach the semifinals.

Top-seeded Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, meanwhile, rifled in 20 aces to sail past Byron Black of Zimbabwe 7-6 (7-3) 6-2.

Sixth seed Jim Courier of the United States overcame 13 aces to knock off two-time champion and fourth-seeded Dutchman Richard Krajicek 7-6 (7-5) 7-5, and second-seeded Thomas Enqvist of Sweden breezed past close friend Kenneth Carlsen of Denmark 6-3 7-5.

Twice this week, Philipoussis struggled from a set down and 0-2 to charge to victory. But there was no comeback this time.

"I'm very disappointed," said Philipoussis, the world's 13th-ranked player. "It was my first tournament back since Wimbledon and I thought I had a good chance to win here."

Raoux posted his second consecutive upset over an Australian Davis Cupper in as many days following a straight-sets sweep over fifth seed Patrick Rafter.

The victory sets up a clash against Enqvist.

"He's a dangerous player," said the Swede, who holds a 2-1 career edge over Raoux. "He's hitting the ball tough. It's going to be an exciting match."

Ivanisevic said he was doing better than he expected.

"I'm very surprised," said the world's third-ranked player, who improved to 42-13 this year following his 72-minute sweep of Black. "I didn't expect to win many matches. I came here to practice but now that I'm in the semis I want to reach the finals."

Ivanisevic ran off the final four points of the tiebreaker, punctuated by a 131 mph (211 kph) rocket to end the opening set.

He gained a pair of service breaks in the fourth and six games to run his career record to 6-0 against Black to set up a showdown with Courier.

Courier and Krajicek engaged in brilliant one-hour, 50-minute showdown in the marquee night match.

Courier's aggressive game sparked as he raised his career mark to 7-1 against last year's Wimbledon champion.

"I don't really know and don't want to ask the question why I am successful against Richard," said Courier. "I just keep going out and playing him the best I can. He's a good player. To have a record like that against him is unusual."

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMAR HERSH

A BIT OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 4 3
♥ 7 4 3
♦ Q J 10
♣ A Q 10 8 5

WEST
♠ Q J 9 5
♥ K Q 10 9 8
♦ 6 3
♣ 7 5

EAST
♠ K 10 7 6 2
♥ 7 6
♦ 8 7 4 2
♣ K 2

SOUTH
♠ A 8
♥ A J 6
♦ A K 9 5
♣ J 9 6 4

The bidding: WEST NORTH EAST
1NT Pass 3NT Pass
Pass

Opening lead: Queen of ♠

Looking at all four hands, South cannot come to nine tricks at three no trump without some help from the defense. Yet when this hand was played in an international match, one declarer brought home the contract, and it is difficult to fault the defender sitting West.

The auction was a simple exercise in arithmetic. South's opening bid showed 16-18 points and, with nine points and a good five-card suit, North wasted no time in get-

ting to the final contract. At both tables West led the queen of hearts, an opening lead which requests partner to unblock the jack if possible. To guard against the actual distribution, declarer was forced to hold up the ace so, when the first trick fished only low cards, West shifted to the queen of spades. Declarer could not avoid losing four spade tricks, one heart and the king of clubs, down two.

At the other table South also realized that winning the ace of hearts at the first trick would leave the fate of the contract hanging on the location of the king of clubs, but the play to this trick was dramatically different. Since a spade shift would obviously be damaging, declarer decided to draw attention from the spade suit by doing what West asked — unblock the jack of hearts!

Be honest. Wouldn't you think the opening lead had struck gold by exposing an ace-jack doubleton in the closed hand, and so continue with a heart to the ace? The club finesse lost, but when East could not revert to a heart, declarer was home with an overtrick.

What if East held another heart? Then the suit would split 4-3, and declarer would lose no more than three hearts and a club.

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Martinez finally beats nemesis Seles

PALO ALTO, California (R) — Spain's Conchita Martinez outlasted her nemesis Monica Seles 7-6 (7-5) 6-4 in a nearly two-hour quarter-final at the \$450,000 Bank of the West Classic Friday for her biggest singles victory since winning Wimbledon in 1994.

Martinez, who was 0-11 and had never won a set against Seles entering the match, put on a brilliant tactical display, consistently confounding her more powerful opponent with deep backhand slices to the second-seeded Seles's rickety forehand.

"I can't explain how happy I am," said Martinez, the sixth seed. "First, that I finally beat Monica Seles. Second, because I finally played my game. In the past, I would get tentative and give it to her. This time, I beat Monica and I won over myself, too."

"Winning a Grand Slam is great, but for my confidence, this win is right up there."

World number one Martina Hingis's steely confidence was nearly shaken in a 6-1 6-7 (9-7) 6-3 victory over unseeded American Linda Wild.

Bouncing her racket off the court in disgust with her sputtering groundstrokes, Hingis was down 2-0 in the third set before regaining her composure and control of the court.

"I always have one bad day at a tournament and this was it," the 16-year-old Swiss said. "It wasn't easy having to play two days in a row at 7:30 p.m. I can't do anything much during the day because I don't want to get tired. I've already been horseback riding and rollerblading twice. If I go to the mall again, I'll spend more money than I'll make all week."

The winner of the Bank of the West will take home \$79,000.

In a semifinal Saturday, Hingis will meet American Lindsay Davenport, a 7-6 (7-2) 6-3 winner over Russia's Elena Likhovtseva.

Martinez had plenty of opportunities to fold. She was up 3-0 in the first set and let Seles claw into the tiebreaker. But leading 6-5 in the breaker, Martinez went for a wicked slice serve that Seles dumped into the net.

The 25-year-old broke Seles to open the second set, and leading 4-3, gamely fought off two break points, the first on a backhand volley shot from her shoe tips after a 20-ball rally, and the second on a swinging forehand volley she pisted into the corner. Martinez yelled in delight and went on to win the match with a scorching service winner.

"I was completely focused, I was not scared at all," said the 11th-ranked Martinez, who has been working with a sports psychologist and physical trainer in an attempt to re-enter the top five.

Seles was puzzled that Martinez was able to sustain herself mentally. "After I lost the tiebreaker I was surprised, especially after coming back from 3-0 down. But in the second set, well, I just tried to play the points."

The nine-time Grand Slam champion said that all afternoon she had hands of stone that kept her from attempting more winners.

"I wasn't feeling the ball well enough today so that I could control the points, so I was just putting the ball back," Seles said. "I guess that wasn't the best tactic to use."

Seles, who has not won a title in 10 months, was so disgusted with her game that she decided to enter the Toshiba classic in San Diego next week despite a bad back.

Seles was able to get into the tournament because Jennifer Capriati withdrew. Capriati has been nursing an ankle injury she sustained at the Italian Open in May and has not played since.

Martinez will meet third seed Amanda Coetzer of South Africa in the semifinals. Coetzer beat Martinez for the first time in 11 meetings in the fourth round of the French Open in June. Coetzer took American Kimberly Po 7-5 6-4 in Friday's quarter-finals.

David Greifinger said. "They want him to run a 100, and we'll talk to them at the World Championships."

Greifinger said Lewis also would do some exhibitions for the Nike apparel corporation next year "on the track" in Australia.

The 36-year-old Lewis announced last week that he would end his career in the United States with an exhibition relay at a U.S.

Football game between the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Houston on September 13 at Houston, his hometown.

Lewis also plans to compete in three meetings in Europe. He will run 100-meter races in Zurich on August 13 and in Brussels on August 22 and either a

100 metres or 4x100-meter relay at Berlin on August 26, Greifinger said.

"The Berlin meet will be his last in Europe," Greifinger said.

But a press release Friday from the governing body for the world student games in Sicily mentioned Lewis as being interested

in a special world sprint festival there August 30-31.

"Lewis, the greatest athlete in modern history, will be making his final appearance in Europe," the release said.

"I don't know anything about that," Greifinger said.

Ben Johnson loses bid to return to competition

BRAMPTON, Ontario (R)

— Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson, banned for life from international competition after testing positive for drugs, on Friday lost his bid to end his exile.

Ontario judge Moira Caswell rejected Johnson's application to have his ban declared an illegal restraint of trade.

"It is necessary to protect the right of the athlete, including Mr. Johnson, to fair competition, to know that the race involves only his own skill, his own strength, his own spirit and not his own pharmacologist," Caswell said in a written ruling delivered from the bench.

Johnson said he has not decided whether he will appeal Friday's court ruling, but vowed to continue his fight to race again and prove he is still the world's fastest man.

"I am kind of disappointed, but I have to just hold on. The lawyers and my advisers will get this moving in a better way," the former star sprinter said outside the courtroom.

Johnson, 36, became the centre of the sport's most infamous doping scandal after he won the 100 metres gold medal at the 1988 Seoul Olympics, clocking a record 9.79 seconds.

Shortly afterward, Johnson tested positive for anabolic steroids in Seoul. He was stripped of his medal and his world record was struck from the books.

Johnson was banned from competition for two years, and at an official Canadian inquiry into drugs in sport that followed the scandal, he admitted to many years of illegal steroid use.

In 1993, Johnson was banned for life after a test found high levels of testosterone in his system. He has denied using an illegal substance and his lawyers argued that the IAAF, which governs international athletics, did not give their client a fair hearing and denied his right to work.

Caswell said in her ruling that the public had an interest in the protection of the integrity of the sport. She

said the elite athlete was viewed as a hero and his influence over the young athlete could not be underestimated.

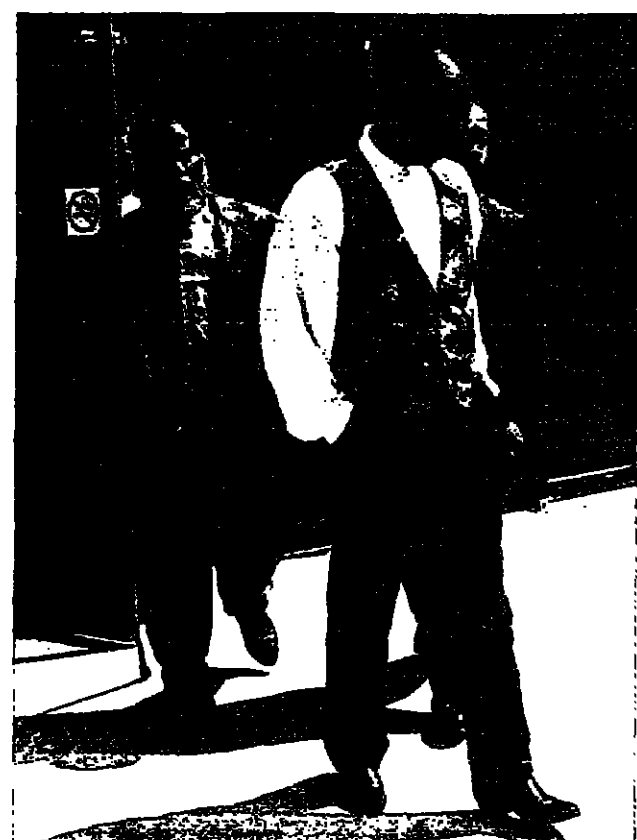
She said Johnson became rich and famous because of his athletic performances, in some of which he had admitted he was cheating.

"Most major sports impose a lifetime ban after an athlete has been caught for a second time using banned substances," she said.

But Johnson proclaimed his innocence outside the courtroom on Friday. "Why do you think I'm here today? No, I am not a cheater," he told reporters.

The court decision came a few days before world athletics leaders debate whether to soften penalties on drug cheats in the face of recent civil court decisions.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) will decide whether to halve its four-year ban for serious offences at a two-day meeting on July 30 and 31.



Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson, banned for life from international competition after testing positive for drugs, leaves court after failing in his bid to be reinstated (Reuters photo)

Johnson's lawyers had hoped a favourable court ruling would put pressure on the IAAF to lift Johnson's lifetime ban from competition.

Johnson has tried other sports in the past four years, but with little success. The money he earned as one of the world's elite runners is dwindling.

In the court case, athletics Canada lawyers argued the sport's body had done nothing to prevent Johnson from earning a living.

They contended most of Johnson's earnings did not come from competitive events, but from endorsements, which dried up after 1988.

Johnson's case has divided opinion in Canada's athletics community. Current Olympic sprint champion Donovan Bailey has said Johnson should not be allowed to race again.

Others suggested the Johnson case would force athletic officials to revamp their rules or face losing control of the sport.

Carl Lewis has lots of 'last' meets

LOS ANGELES (R) —

Nine-times Olympic champion Carl Lewis's retirement celebration keeps growing.

One of history's greatest athletes will probably run his last competitive race in Tokyo in September, the attorney for Lewis's club, the Santa Monica Track Club, said Friday.

"The super meet (in Tokyo September 6) wants him, so I fully expect him to be there,"

David Greifinger said.

"They want him to run a 100, and we'll talk to them at the World Championships."

Greifinger said Lewis also would do some exhibitions for the Nike apparel corporation next year "on the track" in Australia.

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"I don't know anything about that," Greifinger said.

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Third Australian injured in Israeli bridge collapse dies

TEL AVIV (AP) — A third Australian athlete injured when a bridge collapsed at the opening of the Maccabiah Games two weeks ago has died, hospital and team officials said Saturday.

Elizabeth Sawicki, 47, of Melbourne, a member of the Australian Bridge team, was injured July 14 when a temporary bridge made of wooden planks supported by metal rods collapsed into the polluted Yarkon River as about 100 members of the Australian team were crossing it to enter a stadium as part of the athletes' procession in the opening ceremonies.

Her condition deteriorated two days ago, and she died early Saturday of lung and kidney problems at a hospital in the northern Israeli town of Afula. Her family had flown in from Australia to be with her.

"Elizabeth's death is a devastating blow to all of the Australian team and once again highlights the

magnitude and ongoing effect of the tragedy," team officials said in a statement. "We are praying for their full recovery and safe return to Australia."

Five other Australian athletes remain hospitalised, two in intensive care. Bowlers Gregory Small, 37, and Yette Bennett, 50, died the day of the bridge collapse.

Officials said they were making arrangements to have Sawicki's body flown to Australia, where her funeral would take place.

The "Jewish Olympics," a quadrennial sporting event that attracted some 5,600 athletes from more than 50 countries to Israel, ended Thursday.

A government inquiry found negligence on the part of almost everyone involved with the bridge, from the games' organisers to the engineer who designed it and the builders.

According to a committee of engineers who investigated, "a chain of failures"

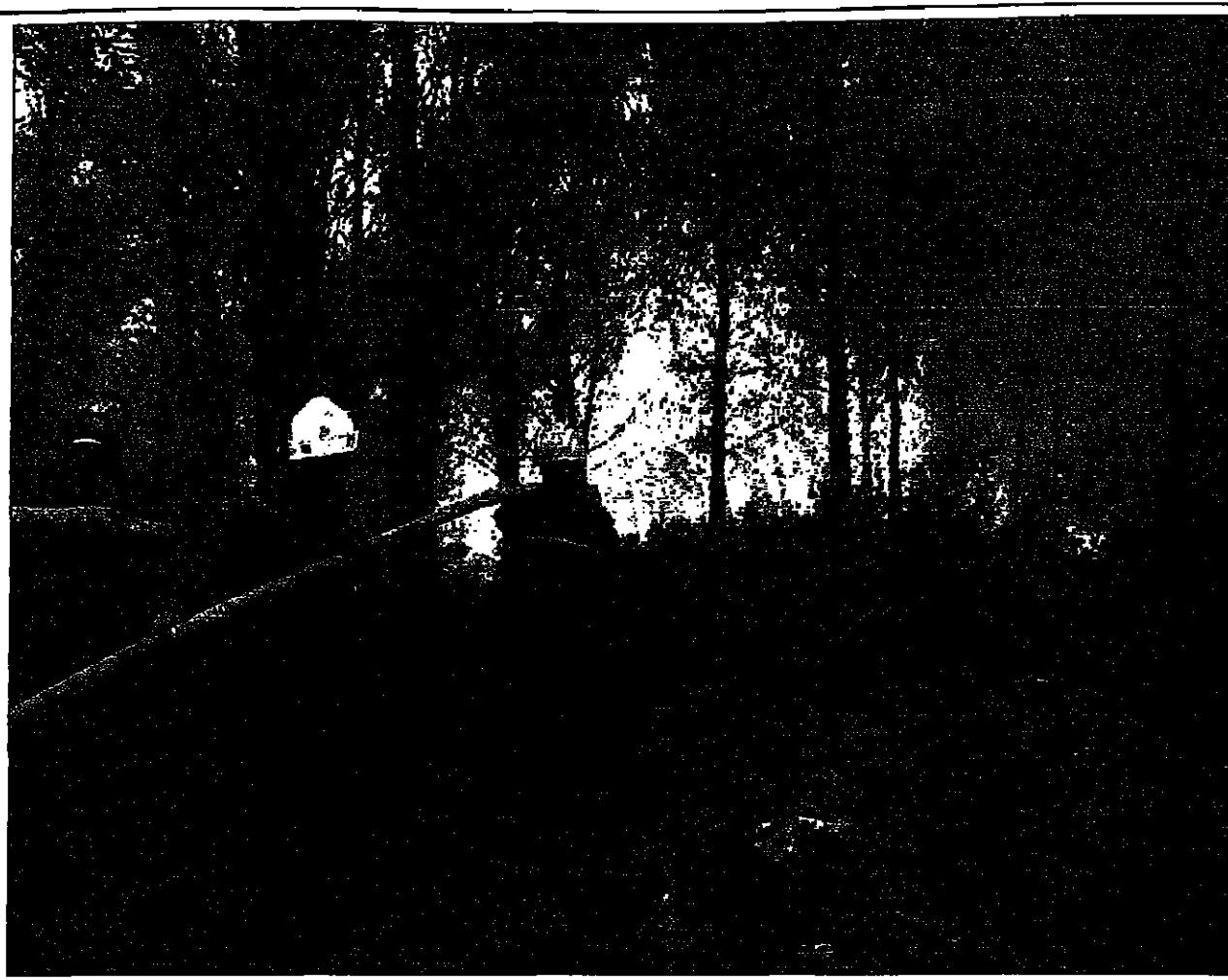
led to the collapse, including failure to meet standard weight specifications, poor coordination between the planners and builders, faulty construction with damaged or substandard materials by unqualified builders, improperly positioned materials and incomplete welding, and lack of supervision and control.

Police have launched a criminal investigation into the collapse and media reports said several indictments were expected.

"Now that the report of the Dotan committee has been delivered, we call on the government of Israel to swiftly act upon its findings and bring those responsible to justice," the team management's statement said.

"We implore the government to ensure that immediate compensation is made available to the families of the deceased and to those who have been injured."

Sawicki had two children, who were with her when she died.



ACRES OF BUSH LAND BURNT DOWN: Firemen battle against the bush blaze in the outskirts of the southern French city of Marseilles, Saturday. Fanned by strong winds, the fire has destroyed hundreds of acres north of the city, obliging some 1,000 homes to be evacuated (AFP photo)

'Vampire of Tehran' goes on trial for murder spree

TEHRAN (AFP) — An Iranian cabdriver suspected of raping and killing at least 11 women passengers went on trial Saturday at a hearing attended by families of the victims.

Security forces had to march into the courtroom to impose order, the official news agency IRNA said, without giving further details.

The suspect, Ali Reza Khoshro Kuran Kordieh, 28, has been dubbed the "Tehran vampire" for the

series of grisly killings which has shocked Iran.

The cabdriver from Ghotshan in northeastern Iran has reportedly confessed to slaying nine women in the Tehran region. Newspapers say he is accused of abducting, raping and killing at least 11 women and burning their bodies to try to prevent identification.

According to his "confessions" reported by the press, Kordieh went out hunting women once a week in his

taxi.

Tehran police chief Yusef Reza Abolfathi said Kordieh was arrested in 1993 for the abduction and rape of a young girl but managed to escape police custody on his way to trial.

Police initially announced that the "vampire" was an Afghan refugee living illegally in Iran, sending shock waves throughout the Afghan community here and stroking anti-Afghan feeling among the rest of the population.

Families meet British nurses on eve of Saudi murder trial

RIYADH (AFP) — The families of two British nurses who risk death if convicted of killing an Australian colleague in Saudi Arabia visited the women Saturday ahead of what could be a crucial hearing, an embassy spokesman said.

The British spokesman said Lucille McLauchlan's mother and father as well as Deborah Parry's sister and brother-in-law saw the nurses in Dammam, eastern Saudi Arabia, where they have been held in jail since December.

The families have also asked to be allowed to attend Sunday's session at an Islamic court in nearby Khobar, said the spokesman, Alex Brown. "But it is being held in a judge's office... so it may not be physically possible."

British and Australian consuls have been granted access to the trial, as well as lawyers for the defence and for victim Yvonne Gilford's family, a rare phenomenon

for Islamic courts in the Saudi kingdom.

A legal source close to the trial has said the case, which opened May 19, is nearing a verdict.

At its last session on July 7, the three-judge panel recognised the right of Gilford's brother in Australia, Frank, to decide whether to grant mercy if the nurses are found guilty and sentenced to be beheaded under Islamic law.

Frank Gilford has ruled out clemency if they are convicted of murder.

Under Islamic law, the victim's family has the right to spare the lives of their relatives' killers and accept a financial settlement under a provision called "Diya" in Arabic.

The Australian nurse's body was found on December 11 in her dormitory at King Fahd Military Medical Complex in Dhahran, also near Khobar. She had been stabbed 13 times, beaten and suffocated.

The defence has during the two-week adjournment submitted its case for the retracted confessions of McLauchlan and Parry to be dismissed on the grounds they were extracted under duress.

The foreign office, meanwhile, said it was "concerned" about conditions at the Dammam all-women prison.

"We have made a request to the Saudi authorities on the subject of the conditions in the prison, but they are yet to respond," the spokesman said. "We will continue to seek an improvement in their conditions."

Jonathon Ashbee, Parry's brother-in-law, said before flying out of Britain with his wife Sandra that both nurses were sick with diarrhoea and needed hospital treatment.

But according to the embassy spokesman, "the accommodation is better than average" for a Saudi prison and the air conditioning unit in their cell has now

been repaired.

Mr. Ashbee said Friday that "the prime objective of our visit was always going to be to give the girls a lift, to raise their morale so that they can go on... the girls are under tremendous mental strain."

The British women initially confessed to the murder, referring to a lesbian relationship. But they later retracted the confessions in the closed-door trial, saying they had been physically and mentally abused by interrogators.

The accused have also threatened to sue a U.S. law firm linked to Jim Phipps, one of the Gilford family's lawyers, for \$200 million if they are acquitted, accusing it of jeopardising their lives.

"His behaviour has been a disgrace. He is a disgrace to his profession and a disgrace to himself," Mr. Ashbee said of Mr. Phipps, a Riyadh-based U.S. lawyer who has declined to comment on the charges.

U.S. official leaves Sudan after ice-breaking visit

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A U.S. official has left the Sudanese capital after the highest-level U.S. visit in more than four years, aimed at promoting an end to the war raging in southern Sudan.

Gare Smith, the U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for human rights and democracy, left late Friday, heading for another, undisclosed African capital, officials said.

His visit to Sudan is judged as significant by the regime here which, on Washington's list of countries that sponsor terrorism, has been deprived of U.S. economic aid since President Omar Bashir seized power in 1989.

Washington said earlier this year it planned to isolate Khartoum for backing terrorism and abuses of human rights.

But latterly signs have grown of a detente in their relations.

This followed an important peace agreement signed with some six rebel groups in southern Sudan in April

and an apparent willingness by Khartoum to discuss sensitive human rights issues.

On Wednesday, the U.S. embassy here said that during his visit Mr. Smith would raise "important human rights questions such as the state of law, freedom of worship, allegations about slavery, the peace process and democracy" in Sudan.

And in a meeting Thursday, General Bashir told Mr. Smith that Sudan was keen to "overcome obstacles" blocking better relations.

"Sudan is willing to overcome the obstacles standing on the way of improving its relations with the United States," he said, according to the official Al Anbaa daily.

Indicating steps taken to end Sudan's 14-year civil war, Gen. Bashir appealed to the international community to urge the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to "sit down at the negotiating table to spare the blood of the Sudanese," the paper said southern

Sudanese rebels have been fighting Khartoum since 1983, seeking to end the domination of the mainly Muslim north over the Christian and animist south.

The war has ravaged the region and is estimated by Western agencies to have cost around one million lives.

The April peace deal has so far been rejected by the largest rebel grouping, the SPLA, but other nations in the region which have relations with the SPLA have shown signs of interest in it.

Press reports here Saturday quoted Mr. Smith as saying that the April peace agreement, which the government is keen to promote, was "an important step" and saying he would urge other states in the region and the SPLA's leader John Garang to back the accord.

Newspapers said Mr. Smith had held long talks with officials here on widespread reports of continued modern-day slave-trading in Sudan.

Waste crisis turns Beirut into mountains of reeking rubbish

BEIRUT (AFP) — Thousands of tonnes of stinking rubbish is piling up on the streets of Beirut after the city's only clean-up company stopped work because it has run out of places to dump waste.

The crisis, which erupted at the start of the week, is also threatening to pit Muslim and Christian communities against each other as they struggle to get rid of garbage from the city's residential suburbs.

In front of apartments and shops throughout the suburbs, the reeking mountains of household and commercial waste attract clouds of flies and mosquitoes, the stench exacerbated by hot summer temperatures.

The air is being choked even more by plumes of putrid smoke given off by fires set by inhabitants attempting to burn their waste.

The chaos erupted after the authorities decided to close the Burj Hammud depot in a Christian neighbourhood of Beirut last week.

Local politicians and inhabitants, mainly Armenian, had threatened a civil disobedience protest if the government did not act to clear up the site, which had become overwhelmed by the mass of rubbish brought from Beirut and neighbourhoods near and far.

Sukleen, a private cleaning company, halted its activities in the city suburbs at the start of the week because it could not find anywhere else to

dump the rubbish. The only garbage treatment plant in the quarantine neighbourhood at the northern end of Beirut, but it is unable to absorb the thousands of tonnes of waste, according to the environment ministry.

Sukleen, which cleaned up Beirut and the suburbs after the 1975-1990 civil war, said it is waiting for authorities to find new rubbish depots, but Environment Minister Akram Shehayed said there will be no solution for at least three months — "the time needed to set up a new waste treatment factory."

The rubbish scandal threat-

ens to become a war fought on religious grounds, Al Safir newspaper warned Saturday, saying the actions of Christian and Muslim communities was "poisoning the health of the people and public life."

Authorities also accused supporters of the hardline wing of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah Sheikh Subhi Toufayli, fed up with putrid fumes, of setting fire to an incinerator at Amrussiyeh, on the outskirts of a southern Shiite suburb.

"The Christian community for example, predominant in one of the neighbourhoods

with a depot or an incinerator, is refusing to receive waste from another district that is strongly Muslim, and vice-versa, or its war," an editorialist with Al Safir wrote.

During Friday prayers, the spiritual chief of the Shiite community, Sheikh Mohammad Shamseddin and the spiritual guide of Shiites, Sheikh Mohammad Hussein Fadlallah, condemned the build-up of the rubbish mountains.

"We cannot put the lives of millions of innocent people at risk to take revenge on a few vandals," Sheikh Shamseddin said.



SUMMER IN LEBANON: A Lebanese girl walks past honour guards waiting for the arrival of Sheikh Khalifa Ben Abdullah Al Khalifa, the secretary-general of the Arab Yachting Union of the Automobile et Touring Club du Liban (ATCL), in Kaslik, Friday (AFP photo)

Beach-bumming iguanas enrage Italian MP

ROME (AFP) — Italians are taking their pet iguanas to the beach this summer, and a Green member of parliament wants the government to put a stop to it right now.

Procacci is asking the Environment and Interior Ministry to take tough steps "to prohibit this stupid and cruel fashion, that makes animals mere objects."

parliamentary sources said Saturday. The Corriere Della Sera newspaper confirms the trend, saying that sporting an iguana on one's shoulder is as much a seaside must this season as a perfect tan.

Several hundred iguanas are imported illegally every year to Italy, mainly from Peru and the U.S.

Those critics should probably be considered the lucky ones, Corriere Della Sera said. "In central America, their native land, the natural fate of these little dinosaurs is the cooking pot."

Calif. twins get in car accident — with each other

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Identical twins showing off their new cars collided, sending one brother hurtling into a house, police said Friday.

Brothers Geoffrey and Christopher Putt, 18, smashed into each other Wednesday night in Alameda, a city across the bay from San Francisco.

Police said they were trying to get the brothers out of their new cars when one brother smashed through a stop sign and into a house, sending it spinning into a house. Neither Putt was hurt in the accident, but the cars, both Nissans, were badly damaged.

"His behaviour has been a disgrace. He is a disgrace to his profession and a disgrace to himself," Mr. Ashbee said of Mr. Phipps, a Riyadh-based U.S. lawyer who has declined to comment on the charges.

U.K. police to question woman caught with boy, 14

LONDON (R) — British police flew to Florida on Friday to interview a woman who has been charged with "lewd and lascivious behaviour" after she was caught with her neighbour's 14-year-old son in an apparent elopement from England.

Tracey Lee Whalin, 33, was a mother in a big charge in a Monroe county, Florida Court Thursday after she and teenager Sean Kinsella were found together in a condominium in the Florida Keys, a seaside resort area. British police said they want to speak to Kinsella before meeting U.S. prosecutors Monday to discuss transferring Whalin back to England.

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Parents abandon quarrelsome boys at gas station

DIEDORF (AFP) — Police picked up two under age boys near this southern village after their parents dropped them off at a gas station, fed up with their constant quarrelling, police said.

The father later told police he had meant to teach the 9-year-old and 12-year-old boys a lesson when they would not listen as they were sitting in the car. The boys were found on a road near a gas station, police said.

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